

# COUNTRY LIFE

**THE** JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN  
COUNTRY LIFE AND COUNTRY PURSUITS. **ILLUSTRATED.**

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Photo, LAFAYETTE.

MRS. ATHERTON.

179, New Bond Street.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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## EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Editor will be glad to receive for consideration photographs, instantaneous or otherwise, besides literary contributions, in the shape of articles and descriptions, as well as short stories, sporting or otherwise, not exceeding 2,000 words. Contributors are specially requested to place their names and addresses on their MSS. and on the backs of photographs. The Editor will not be responsible for the return of artistic or literary contributions which he may not be able to use, and the receipt of a proof must not be taken as evidence that an article is accepted. Publication in COUNTRY LIFE alone will be recognised as acceptance. Where stamps are enclosed, the Editor will do his best to return those contributions which he does not require.

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\* \* We are sorry that by a regrettable printer's error the excellent photograph of Miss Carless's Borzoi, Micheal Oscar, reproduced in our issue of March 11th, was wrongly attributed to Mr. C. Reid. The picture was taken by Mr. F. C. Sloate, of Casleberg Studio, Stafford, to whom our apologies are due.

## OLD-FASHIONED STEEPLECHASING

IT is a welcome sign of the times that the close of every successive hunting season is marked by an annually increasing number of point-to-point steeplechase meetings. There is no older or truer adage than that which says "History repeats itself," and it is really remarkable with what unflinching regularity the wheel of fortune turns in connection with most of the affairs of this world.

Perhaps nothing is a better exemplification of the truth of this than the history and present-condition of steeplechasing. It is not a very old sport, but it has passed through many stages since it was first instituted, now some hundred years ago. It originated, as its name implies, in the races over a country got up by the hunting men of those days, and in which the competitors, who rode the horses they had been hunting all the season, had to find their way as best they could to some conspicuous landmark. These events naturally caused much

interest in the districts in which they took place, and so it came to pass that, as time went on, and the spectators became anxious to see more of the fun, the lines of country chosen gradually became more and more circular. This by degrees necessitated the use of flags, then stands and enclosures came to be introduced, until at last the full-blown steeplechase meeting, as it existed in those days of country meetings, was evolved. This was the period when steeplechasing achieved its greatest popularity and success. The courses were mostly flagged out over natural fences, and were calculated to test the jumping capabilities as well as the speed of the competitors. They varied, too, according to the countries in which they were situated; and as most of the horses and their riders who took part in the steeplechases of those days were as a rule well known to the inhabitants of the districts in which they took place, these meetings excited an interest amongst hunting men, farmers, and the local public generally which has never existed since this class of steeplechasing has become a thing of the past. There were great horses, too, in those days, horses bred and kept and trained especially for making steeplechasers, and whose tempers had not been soured or their legs injured by premature racing on the flat. Many of these learnt their trade in the hunting-field—by far the best school for teaching a young horse to jump when he is tired, and to stay over fences—whilst the merits of many a subsequently great chaser were in those days first discovered at some little local meeting. One of such was that wonderful stayer Pathfinder, who began life by carrying one of Mr. Coupland's whips with the Quorn, then won a little steeplechase at the Quorn Hunt Meeting, and eventually blossomed into a Grand National winner. He was by no means a fast horse, but he was never tired of jumping, and as long as there were fences in front of him he could go on.

In these days he might never have been sent to run his first race at one of the modern "Parks," and if he had, some cast-off flat-racer would probably have galloped him silly over the artificial obstacles which require little or no jumping. Flat-racing must necessarily be a test of speed, steeplechasing should be, before all, a test of jumping—and by jumping we do not mean merely the capacity to get to the other side of a fence without falling, but the art of getting over a country, not only with speed and safety, but also without tiring. We have all known many great performers who could never go on jumping for more than a couple of miles, or three at the most. Boyne Water and Coronet were brilliant instances of this class in recent times, whilst in the immediate present there are Ebor and Chair of Kildare. Others, on the other hand, have a knack of jumping fences with such ease to themselves that they never seem to tire over a country. Such were Frigate, Seaman, and Cloister, all three bred in Ireland be it noted, where horses are undoubtedly far better schooled than they are in this country. To go back to the subject of hunting as connected with steeplechasing, there is no better school than the hunting-field for teaching a horse to jump and to go on at it when he is tired; and it is a fact that there were a far better lot of steeplechasers in training in the days when they were partly recruited from the hunting-field than there are now when they come almost wholly from the training stables of Epsom and Newmarket. In those days, again, a large number of hunting men and farmers kept an old brood mare or two of noted jumping blood, from whom they used to breed likely young horses, perhaps good enough for steeplechasing, and if not that, certain to make high-class hunters at any rate. This was about the time when there were such chasers as Cortolvin, The Colonel, and The Lamb, and when the sport was going strong.

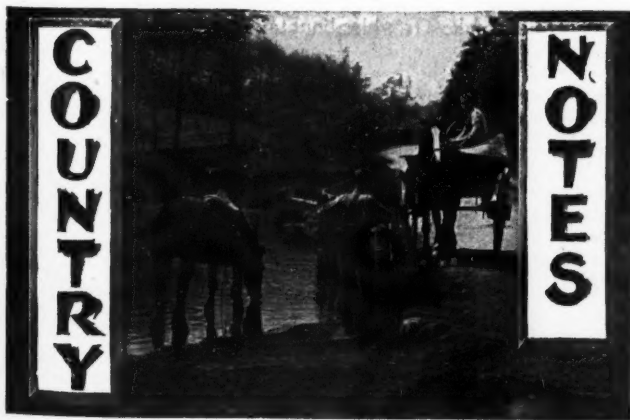
Unfortunately, abuses crept in, and the more the sport increased in popularity, so much the more did the want of a governing body become apparent. In the autumn of 1866 the Grand National Hunt Committee called itself into existence to control the new sport, and from that day its decadence commenced. Things went all right for a time, until certain people, beginning to see that there was money in the business, started meetings on artificial courses, and run on gate-money principles, near London and other big towns. Owners and trainers at once began to run half-schooled cast-offs from the flat over these artificial tracks. Clerks of courses, anxious to secure entries and attract runners, kept on cutting down their "obstacles," until at last the whole game became such a burlesque that the governing body were bound to interfere. They therefore drew up a code of rules as to the number and dimensions of the fences on all steeplechase courses, which were admirable as applied to artificial courses. Unfortunately, they made the fatal mistake of applying these to natural courses as well. It was an act of madness, and it has ruined the sport. The result, as might have been anticipated, was that almost the whole of the old-fashioned country meetings, which brought out so many good horses and did more than anything else to create a public interest in the sport, died out, that the majority of hunting men, farmers, and the country public ceased to take any further interest in it, and that it has now become a last resource for worthless flat-racers, broken-down gamblers, and out-of-work race-course companies in the winter months.



As we began by saying, history repeats itself. The hunting man and the *bonâ fide* sportsman will have none of this so-called sport under the National Hunt authorities, but they dearly love the real thing. Why not resuscitate the old style of cross-country racing? Well, not so many years ago this was done, and the rapid strides this point-to-point racing has since made not only prove the demand there is for the genuine article, but also show plainly that it is destined to shortly take the place of the old-fashioned hunt steeplechase meetings of the past. If the National Hunt Committee had any sense, they would see that herein lies their salvation. They have ruined steeplechasing; point-to-point racing, properly guided and encouraged, would redeem their failure. By all means stick to the existing rules for racing on enclosed and artificial courses; but for Heaven's sake let us have a different code of rules for chasing over open and natural "countries." And yet the governing body have up to now failed to appreciate the chance that has been given them, and are practically strangling their best friend with their absurd and unnecessary rules. Why should there be only three races a day if the promoters of a point-to-point meeting wish to have more? Why should there be no stand from which the public can get a good view of the proceedings, or enclosures in which they will avoid being crowded, and be safe from pickpockets? Then again, as to flags, their rule might well be modified, though, as it is practically altogether disregarded at every point-to-point meeting in England, there is not much use in discussing this point.

In plain truth, it is about time that this sport—point-to-point racing—was taken out of the hands of the National Hunt Committee altogether. Let them continue to look after their hurdle races and obstacle races on artificial tracks at metropolitan and suburban enclosures; but let us have a committee of real sportsmen and hunting men to control point-to-point racing—in other words, genuine steeplechasing.

Very little is required—a few plain, simple rules, and a certain number of inspectors of courses to go round and inspect proposed lines of country, and report whether or not they can truthfully be called "fair hunting countries," and are typical of the district in which they are laid out. When point-to-point racing has been properly organised on these lines, and placed under the control of some practical and sensible body of men, we shall see a return to the good old chasing of the past, to the old natural "countries," and the horses for whom no country was too big, and no distance too far; hunting men will once more take an interest in the sport; farmers and country gentlemen will again breed horses for it, and steeplechasing will once more become the popular sport it was before the Grand National Hunt authorities ruined it. It is upon point-to-point racing more than anything else that the redemption of this sport depends, and the sooner, therefore, that it is taken seriously in hand by a representative body of gentlemen interested in hunting and cross-country sport, other than the members of the National Hunt Committee, the better.



FROM French accounts of the agreement for delimitation of the Soudan, there seems a probability that both of the great nations which are competing for dominion in Northern Africa will be left with many years before them to complete their conquests at leisure. This leaves England a free hand to deal with the Mahdi and savagery at one end of the Nile Valley, and to render Egypt one of the best-governed lands of the East at the other. France has for years owned, in Algeria, one of the most perfect playgrounds on earth for Frenchmen who need change or care to build houses and settle in a land which has the charm of the East without its drawbacks. Egypt can scarcely claim to be exempt from Eastern plagues; but we expect to see the Nile season take its place shortly among regular English institutions.

Mr. Balfour, speaking at the coming-of-age dinner of the National Cyclists' Union, gave it as his opinion that England is

destined to be a land of ever-growing cities, and that the cycle was the natural counter-weight, which to many classes was the only thing that made the enjoyment of country life and rural scenery occasionally possible. We believe that the services of the bicycle in preserving this inborn liking of Englishmen for rural scenery cannot be exaggerated. The taste grows by opportunity, and this is given in so admirable a form by the bicycle, that many more people learn to appreciate our good country now than when it was far less crowded with towns, and when towns were much smaller. One has only to look at the papers, especially some of those devoted to cycling, to see that the means of escape from bricks and mortar has been fully appreciated and used to good ends.

The snow lay in parts of Essex last week long enough to show every track of four-footed beasts on its surface. Keepers who were busy with spring trapping found it useful enough. They noted where every stoat and weasel was on their beats, and set the traps accordingly. *Apropos* of the Hon. H. Duncombe's letter in our last issue, we heard of a sensible custom on a large Essex property, in reference to the cat difficulty. When trapping begins, notice is sent round to all the tenants and neighbours to shut up such of their cats as are in the habit of "straying," i.e., poaching, and all the proprietors' house-cats are also confined until the traps are lifted. As an instance of the distance cats wander to poach we hear the following: There is an isolated wood quite one and a-half miles from a small town. In this, one year when it was carefully preserved, nearly forty cats were taken. There are no houses close to the wood.

This evil habit that the winter is contracting, in these latter years of the century, of beginning only when the almanack says that it is spring, is especially hard on the folks who, for health or pleasure, winter abroad. They are apt to be tempted home again by reading in their calendars that "Spring has come," and find that this is just the time they should be going away. The season in the South of France began very late this year, and this fact is universally attributed to the "war scare." But the "war scare" had ceased to scare long before the conventional winter set in. Likely enough it was recognition of the truth that winter weather now comes in spring which sent people abroad later than usual and keeps the prudent abroad till after Easter. But the poor flowers and fruit trees cannot go abroad, and Flora will have to weep for very many of her frost-bitten children.

We hope there is no truth in the statement of the Exchange Telegraph Company's Aldershot agent, that the War Office has decided to supply the military hospitals, prison, and troops at Aldershot with milk from the Government sewage farm, which is noted for its unhealthy surroundings. It is in the swampy valley of a stream called the Blackwater, a place noted for diphtheria and kindred diseases, and medical men say that contamination of the milk is almost certain. We have in our minds the refusal of the War Office to supply a hospital ship to be ready for the invalids coming down from the Soudan. It looks like an attempt to save on the extras which the soldiers now get in the way of rations, and, if persisted in, will awaken just resentment.

Are we to have a new Domesday Book? It seems that something of the kind is contemplated, but of only a semi-official character. A committee is to preside over an issue of county histories, and the committee will include Lord Salisbury and other personages eminent in the State and learned in the law. Four volumes will be allotted to each county, and the first county to be dealt with is that which the author of Domesday Book selected to be the seat of his government and the scene of his sport, viz., Hampshire. We trust that in any case the aid of photography will be secured to illustrate these volumes. Nothing else will give to future generations so vivid or valuable a record. Something of the kind is coming out weekly in *COUNTRY LIFE* at the present time. From county costume to cathedrals, from the designs of farm buildings to the size of trees, or the general aspect and blending of the old and new to-day, which will all be old to the future generations which will read these histories, there is little in county history, written for posterity, which photography will not embellish and make more valuable for reference and history.

The old Physic Garden at Chelsea was suffering from want of funds to keep it in order, and has now been handed over to the trustees of the London Parochial Charities, who are going to spend £800 a year on its maintenance. It was originally left to the Apothecaries' Company by Sir Hans Sloane, in 1721, to grow medical plants in, and stands on the embankment opposite to Swan Walk. The purpose for which it was originally intended is outside its possible sphere of usefulness now. But with the example of the splendid gardening seen opposite, across the

river in the sub-tropical garden at Battersea Park, it will probably become a thing of beauty as well as of usefulness. We shall be curious to learn on what plan the gardening will be carried out.

Three otters are said to have been shot at Shepperton. According to the published accounts they were driven on to an eyot and shot. This appears improbable; but there seems no doubt that they were shot, and we wonder why. On a river as large as the Thames at Shepperton otters do no real harm, and should be let alone, or trapped in ordinary box traps. They would then be available for sale. Several of our readers have recently enquired where a live otter could be bought as a pet, and we have little doubt that a good price could be had for them if taken uninjured.

Spurnpoint, in Yorkshire, has seen a good many strange migrants from abroad laid on its beach, from invading kings to flights of Norway woodcock and an occasional eagle. The latest arrival is an elephant's skull, which is certainly not a "common object of the seashore." It was found by Mr. D. Murray, of Kelsea, near Spurn, and exhibited at a meeting of the Hull Field Club. It is supposed to have been the skull of an elephant that died when on board ship, and was thrown overboard.

It seems beyond doubt that "elk" or Wapiti deer have been found again on the Eastern Coast of Canada, where they have not been seen for thirty years. Till 1875 a few were believed to be left in the forests of Michigan, but now the "elk" is confined to the Rocky Mountains and the western side of the continent. The specimen recently killed was shot not far from the head of Chaleurs Bay. Three years ago Count H. de Puiggallon found the tracks of elk, and saw two in the distance, in Western Quebec. It is doubtful whether these are survivors of the ancient herd or escaped deer from some modern preserve. The latter is more probable.

The Suffolk County Council has agreed *nem. con.* to ask the Secretary of State to make an order forbidding Sunday shooting. Shore fowl will thus get one extra day's protection in every seven, and much annoyance to local feeling caused by bad characters and strangers killing gulls and terns on Sunday will be stopped. As it is illegal to kill game on Sunday, there is no hardship in extending the same protection to other birds. We wonder that it has not been done before. Keepers whose beats are along the coast-line will rejoice greatly.

There seems to be no doubt about the quality of the representative eleven that Australia is about to send to us this year. Thrice it has beaten good teams—made up of the best that were left—handsomely enough, and three consecutive wins means a deal in a game of the glorious uncertainty of cricket. The play has been good all through the team. It is always this level excellence that makes the merit of Australian elevens. Their batsmen are never beaten, because their last men are very nearly as likely to make runs as their first. They might almost toss up for the order of going in without very greatly weakening the batting power of the side. The practice they have had in playing together against the three teams of "The Rest" will give this particular eleven a further advantage.

We hear that Mr. Francis Gallon's suggestion that animals which win prizes at first-class shows shall be measured and photographed, so that breeders who have not seen them may know exactly what strains to go to to "build up" points in which their stock is lacking, has been acted upon at one of the recent horse shows. The photographs were taken in profile, and a few simple measurements recorded. In the photographs each animal shows a white wafer, previously stuck on to the hip-joint, to make a point from which comparative measurements can be taken with compasses, when persons referring to these portraits wish to do so.

With South African plums selling at a shilling apiece, and North American apples at twopence, no one can say that the prospects of fruit-growing are chilled by want of support from the public. Only give them first-class fruit at the right time, or any time for that matter, and they will buy cheerfully and pay good prices. Meantime nine English orchards out of ten are neglected all round, from the care of the trees to the packing of the fruit. Mr. Spencer Pickering has pointed this out in a paper read before the Farmers' Club, illustrated by reference to the Duke of Bedford's fruit farm, an undertaking of which we hope to give some illustrations and a detailed account shortly. The conclusion of the lecturer was that when markets are good and the soil is suitable, there are few more profitable investments in land than fruit-growing. We demur

to the reservation as to markets. In purely rural districts there is often almost no fruit at all, and anyone who will grow it of good quality can make a market at once.

No doubt there will be in some quarters lamentations over the throwing out, "in the meantime," at all events, as Scotch folks say, of the Bill for supplying London with water from the sources of the Wye; but, on the other hand, there will be much jubilation of the right-minded over the rejection of a measure which, if it were carried, would inevitably destroy many a mile of very fine spawning-beds. This is a material consideration, both in connection with the value of fishing property and with the value of fish as a food supply, that will appeal to many who would be quite indifferent to the æsthetic point of view. It is sometimes argued that reservoirs and aqueducts need not of necessity be unlovely objects, but as a plain matter of fact they commonly are.

Admiral Makaroff's new ice-breaking steamer has acted fully up to the claims that he made for it in his recent lecture in Great Britain. According to the latest accounts it succeeded in steaming eight knots an hour while engaged in breaking up ice of 7½ ft. thick. This is surely a wonderful record, and one that entitles Admiral Makaroff to a place among the benefactors not only of his own country, but of the world. It is his own country, no doubt, that his great invention will benefit primarily, because she has so many ice-bound ports. But other countries, notably our own Canadian dominions, will benefit in like manner, and surely it will aid in the search for that hitherto inaccessible point where the compass is expected to stand on its head—the North Pole.

The officers who undertook, of their private enterprise, the rearing and training of the carrier pigeons on Whale Island have been justified of their good work by having it taken over from them, and given official recognition, by the Admiralty. That there can be a better method of communicating from ship to shore, or from island to shore, than that furnished by the homing pigeons is hard to conceive in the absence of the apparatus for telegraphic communication, whether with wire or without. The pigeon has to be trained over the course on which it is proposed to fly it when on duty, but granted that training, and a fair chance of escaping predatory birds, its "homing" is a practical certainty.

Remedy for grievances by questions in Parliament is not a method altogether satisfactory, especially to those that have the responses to make; but it seems as if the action of the Post Office people about letting flowers come into England from the Continent is so vexatious that a question might be asked about it. It seemed such a nice thing, and such a harmless thing, in the old days, both to send and receive little packets of flowers from the Riviera or elsewhere in the South of France. But now they make a trouble about taking them in by the ordinary letter post. There remains the parcel post, but things get so knocked about by the parcel post that you have to encase the flowers in strong boxes of a weight that makes the postage a consideration. We do not want to send or receive a great quantity of the flowers at once. A few once a week or so is what people like to send their friends, to show that they have them in mind. Surely the Post Office need not set itself frigidly against this harmless, unnecessary courtesy.

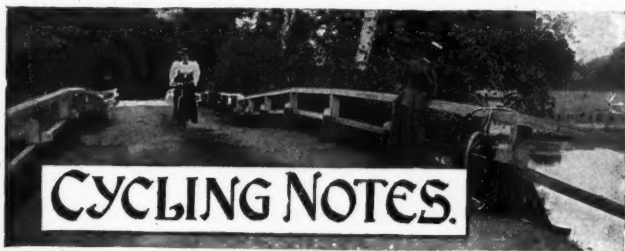
A pointed comment comes from Savoy, on the discussion that we have lately read about the venom of the viper's bite and its effect on man. There are only too many who cherish the comforting fallacy that we have no poisonous, in the sense of deadly, snakes in these islands, and it is well to pile up the argument against this dangerous, if comforting, fallacy, even if those who hold it are not the kind of people to whom argument much appeals. A workman was found, in a forest of the Savoy, dead, beside the bodies of two vipers, one of which he had killed and maimed the other. But the snakes had got their fangs home in the poor man before he could deal them a death-blow, and his life was sacrificed. Presumably he had fallen asleep, and the vipers, attracted by the warmth of his body, had bitten him when he began to wake up and move.

The Germans are certainly superior to us in their forestry, and may be in other departments of gardening too. They have lately set what they maintain to be a very good example in growing gooseberries and currants on standards—that is to say, of the height of 5 ft. or so, convenient for picking and improving the fruit. The result—a straight stem culminating in a bunch of fruit-bearing branches at the top—is arrived at by the simple method of pinching off all side branches from the main stem below the height at which it is wished the fruit-bearing should begin.



Gold and mammoth ivory are two of the "natural commodities" of North Siberia, and it now appears that these two treasures of the frozen zone are also found together at Klondike. A Swede, while digging on his claim near Dominion Creek, found the body of a mammoth which had evidently been overwhelmed by a slide of ice, and in perfect preservation. According to the account given by the *Daily Mail's* correspondent at Vancouver, the flesh cut from the carcase was quite fresh and was eatable, but, like all frozen meat, decayed quickly after a few hours' exposure. It was covered with greyish-black woolly hair 15 in. long. The right tusk was broken, but the left was perfect, and measured 14 ft. 3 in. in length and 48 in. in circumference.

The trade in mammoth ivory still flourishes in North Siberia, and like that in amber is, if one thinks at all, among the most curious in the world. Here we have two substances, one part of a long extinct beast, the other the gum of vanished and extinct trees, sought and used in modern life for ornaments and works of art for the human race of to-day. The Samoyeds of Siberia, among other odd beliefs, hold that mammoths buried in the frozen soil were a race of *gigantic moles* frozen to death when burrowing!



ONE hails with joy a recent decision of the West Riding County Council. Four new highway surveyors are about to be appointed, at a salary of £250 each, and one of the conditions which will govern the selection is that in each case the surveyor must be a cyclist, and travel over the roads within his own district on his cycle. As the *Yorkshire Post* remarks, "That is capital. Next to a ten-ton steam roller, there is nothing like a light roadster for discovering the bumpiness of a road. Cycling in the West Riding ought in future to be more enjoyable. It might easily be made so." This is not the first instance, by the way, of cycling being made a *sine qua non* in the appointment of a road surveyor. In Hertfordshire recently an advertisement was published relative to the selection of assistant surveyors, and the significant words were appended, "No non-cyclist need apply." It is entirely owing to the fact that the head surveyors of the county named are themselves ardent wheelmen that the roads within their jurisdiction are among the best in the kingdom, in marked contrast to their condition only a few years ago. Needless to say, it is not the wheelman only who benefits by the improvement; that is shared by every road-user alike, while the non-user, if a ratepayer, benefits in pocket by the undoubted economy which good road-building indisputably effects.

A great deal of nonsense has been written from time to time on the subject of cycling in the City of London, and there is little doubt but that considerable misapprehension exists concerning the actual condition of affairs which usually prevails within that hive of money-making. Some of the streets are narrow, it is true, and all are fairly thick with traffic, but so are the streets of the metropolis generally, and it is difficult to see why the recognition of the cycle as a vehicle should cease within the City boundaries, in defiance of law and common-sense alike. To test the normal condition of affairs, however, two well-known cycling journalists have recently made an interesting experiment in the shape of a tandem ride through a considerable portion of the City thoroughfares. They met with no accident nor opposition, and fulfilled a round of calls without incident of any sort.

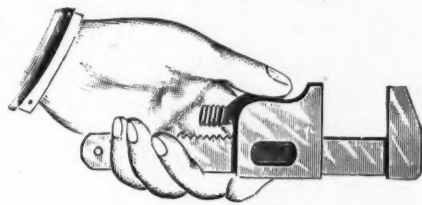
One of them has ably voiced their joint opinions as follows: "To the onlooker, cycling in thick traffic, such as that which congests the streets of the City of London, appears fraught with terrible dangers. The cyclist seems inextricably mixed up in conflicting streams from which there can be no escape, but the rider himself, actually experiencing the passage across London, so long as he is strictly obedient to the existing rules of the road, and has command of his machine, knows that he is safe. He asks no favours, and claims no special privilege; he merely demands that, in common with every other road-user, he shall take his turn in sharing the roadway. The share he needs of the said roadway being infinitely less than that required for any other vehicle whatsoever that passes along the street, the cyclist is necessarily the least obstructive, and his presence the least contributory to congestion, and therefore he should be the very last to be mentioned as deserving of exclusion. The big waggons, the slow and heavy carts, block the currents of traffic; not the cyclists, who occupy inappreciable odd corners which would not be occupied even if they were not there." The net result of the ride is summed up as follows: "The whole journey practically revealed that a circuit such as visitors might make to view the Tower, the Mansion House, the Bank, St. Paul's, or the Law Courts, or to cross from station to station, or that a business man might make to call on his broker, or his insurance or shipping agent, was perfectly feasible, excited no adverse comment, met with no interference, and could not reasonably on any grounds call for prohibition." It must not be forgotten, by the way, that one of the best-known aldermen on the City Bench, who has not been slow to inflict condign punishment upon cyclists who have in any way offended, has himself declared that the existing law is amply strong enough to meet the requirements of the case.

The 1899 pattern of Dunlop tyre has been giving trouble to its users by its tendency to blow off the rim. How much this may be avoided by the exercise of particular care, and how much is due to irregularity in the manufacture, causing some tyres to be satisfactory and others the reverse, I cannot say. The cases that have come under my notice, however, have occurred to riders of exceptional

experience, who have not only taken ordinary care in the replacement of the wires, but, after the unpleasant warning caused by the initial disaster, have been unable, notwithstanding special watchfulness in replacing the covers, to prevent the tyres from bursting anew. It is to be hoped that time will not show the triple-coil attachment to be an insecure one, for there is no manner of doubt but that it is incomparably superior to the original single wire as regards facility of detachment.

A handy little spanner, on a new principle, has been imported by A. W. Gamage, Limited, of Holborn, which should save some portion of the trouble

accompanying the process of tightening or loosening a bolt or nut. As a rule one has to open the jaws of the wrench to the approximate distance, according to the size of the nut concerned, and then turn the screw until a tight fit is obtained. With the new spanner, however, half the usual



amount of time is saved by the fact that the lower jaw slides on a ratchet instead of screwing upwards, and one may run it up to the nut in the fraction of a second. For the reverse motion screwing has to be resorted to in the ordinary way, but it is a convenience to be able to apply the spanner expeditiously in the first instance, especially if one has to take the implement directly from a large nut to a small.

An English tour has been planned by the League of American Wheelmen, and will no doubt attract a considerable amount of interest. What the numerical strength of the party will be when it arrives, about the middle of May, is not yet known, but it has been officially organized by the League, which is a body numbering some 75,000 members. From Southampton, where the party will land, a route will be taken through Bath, Bristol, and Gloucester to Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick, and thence by way of Oxford and Windsor to London, the final stage of the journey being to Folkestone, from which port the tourists will embark for the Continent. Americans have a way of doing these things very thoroughly when they once set about them, and if the party be a large one, as is probable, it may create some little *stir en route*.

THE PILGRIM.



#### SPRINGHILL PONIES.

POLO is still growing. Every year fresh clubs are formed all over the British Empire, both at home and abroad, and every year the game increases in popularity, not only amongst players, but also with the public generally. I shall have something to say later on about the two newest metropolitan clubs, at Wimbledon and the Crystal Palace, but for the present my object is rather to put before my readers a few useful particulars of the ponies which will be offered for sale at Springhill, near Rugby, by the Messrs. Miller, on Saturday, the 8th of April. The more the game increases in popularity, naturally the greater becomes the demand for high-class ponies, and certainly no one has done so much to supply that want as the Messrs. Miller. In the first place they buy nothing but the best, whether made tournament ponies or the raw material, whilst they have brought the breaking and training of these latter to such a pitch of perfection that no bad player ever leaves the Springhill school described as a polo pony. The result of this was their last year's sale, where Sailor made 750 guineas, and some thirty ponies averaged, I think, nearly 300 guineas each.

On Monday last I journeyed down to Springhill to see this year's lot, and on arrival there found Mr. E. D. Miller busy practising some ponies on the polo ground, and brother George teaching another the secrets of bending and passing in the riding school. The usual Springhill hospitality, which was by no means unwelcome on a bitterly cold morning, and then out to inspect the ponies. Of these, which number thirty-five, and are perhaps a more level lot even than last year's, Leila, J. W., Florence, Attack, and Miss Barry were played by E. D. and G. A. Miller in all the important matches of last season, both in England and Ireland. Attack is a beautiful mare, with power and quality, and very clever, whilst Mr. Rawlinson's well-known grey mare Leila is a perfect tournament pony, and Florence, a powerful bay mare, with great bone, is as quick and clever a pony as anyone could wish to ride. Miss Barry, too, is a thick, close-coupled sort, smart and handy withal, and a perfect player, and J. W. is a ripper, strong, fast, and clever. These are five very perfect ponies, and will make big prices. The next lot of twenty-one that I was shown played in games and matches last season, and if not as yet quite of such high-class as the last five, are all good, honest ponies, perfectly trained. Of these I liked especially the old-fashioned, hunter-like grey mare, Pearl, who is full of quality, and can gallop, and Artful, bought from Lord Kensington at the end of last season, a regular *multum in parvo*, full of power and quality, and a prize-winner in a brood mare class. Also purchased from the same source are Orsino and Flashlight, two wiry, useful Argentines, the former of whom is a remarkably perfect player. Another Argentine is the hard, well-shaped Valentine, who was played hard all last season; and then I was shown Irish Girl, an active, cobby sort, and Dorothy, a nice level chestnut mare, rather small, but very easy to play. Blackleg is a thick, strong sort, a fine mover, and a good player; Secret is a wiry chestnut mare, a useful sort, and promising, but wanting time; and Blackberry, a six year old brown mare, bought in Ireland, is a rare sort, hard, compact, short-legged, and clever. Mercedes, a big, varmint mare, Freckles, a powerful bay gelding, and Matron, a strong, thick-set bay mare and a perfect player, are all nice ponies to ride. Cobnut is a rare stamp, and a weight-carrier, but wants a strong heavy man to do her justice, whilst another that should be bought by a heavy man is the hunter-like chestnut mare, Charlotte, who is full of liberty and a great player. Gadfly, by Buckshot, is a shapely sort, full of quality, fast, and easy to play; Rosemary, one of my favourites, is a brown mare, full of length and quality; and

the grey Coquette is easier to play than her name suggests. A galloping sort and easy to play is the brown mare Delilah; Queen Bess is a perfect player, and fast; and Bumb'e Bee is very quick. The next stable I was taken to contained eight first season ponies, of whom I liked best the chestnut mare Policy, a hardy, true-shaped sort, the best-trained pony that ever left Springhill, and the boldest that ever went into a scrimmage. This pony will take some buying when she is put up. Adela is a heavy man's pony, a powerful, well-balanced grey, and a perfect hack, and Reckless is a big, powerful grey mare, with a great rein—just the sort for a big man. A rare sort for a light-weight is Heiress, as handsome as paint, all quality, and with such shoulders; and another blood pony is the big chestnut Angel, a very temperate sort, and fast. I had almost forgotten Kildare among the lot that played in games last year, but I am glad that I remembered her in time, as she is a great sort, especially for a big man.

This is only a short and imperfect description of what I saw last week, but it must be remembered that the brothers Miller only buy one stamp, whether they be old hands at the game or novices, and that is a miniature 14st. blood hunter; and having got these, they never leave Springhill until they are either given away as worthless or made perfect.

OUTPOST.



W. Abrey.

A WAYSIDE INN.

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## CONCERNING . . . . CARTRIDGES.

LAST week's contribution on the subject of loading did not altogether exhaust all that is to be said regarding cartridges. A few days ago the London and provincial gun trade was surprised to receive a joint communication from the three firms that monopolise the manufacture of cartridge-cases in this country, intimating that in consequence of the rise in the price of metal they had decided to increase, by 5 per cent., the wholesale price of cases, etc., the rise taking place from the second week in March. It is quite on the cards, therefore, that sportsmen may have to pay an increased price for the cartridges they use during the coming shooting season. It is on that ground alone that we refer to the matter here; for though wholesale manufacturers do not come into contact with the world of sport, their procedure in this case is likely to affect every sportsman using a gun during the next shooting season. For the profit of the gun-maker on cartridges has been already cut very fine indeed, owing to the competition that has to be contended with in that branch of a gun-maker's business, and a rise such as that announced to the gun trade in the price of the cases, which the gun-maker himself cannot manufacture, and has, therefore, to purchase where he can, is extremely likely to be reflected in the price of the loaded cartridge supplied to the ultimate consumer before the opening of grouse-shooting in August. We make no apology, therefore, for going into the history of the production of a cartridge and its progress in trade circles until it ultimately finds its way into the sportsman's cartridge-bag, at prices ranging, say, from 8s. 9d. to 12s. 6d. per hundred for best ammunition, according to the standing of the gun-maker supplying it, and from 5s. 6d. to 8s. 9d. per hundred for inferior cartridges, factory made and loaded, according to the kind of powder they contain, the cheaper price of 5s. 6d. being for black gunpowder, factory-loaded into cheap foreign cases, and sold by gun-makers who do what their fellows call a "cutting trade." From 5s. 6d. to 12s. 6d. then may be said to be the range of price per hundred cartridges in this country, and the causes of the many differences in the manufactured article when used by the sportsman, from a very low to a comparatively high price may, perhaps, be worth explanation. The highest price is only charged by high-

class London gun-makers, and is, of course, a credit price, the sale being booked to the purchaser, and the price paid when he chooses to sign a cheque for the account.

There can be no doubt, however, that the ammunition supplied at such prices by high-class gun-makers is much more reliable than factory-loaded or inferior cartridges, with which the sportsman who believes in saving money on his shooting expenses has to be content. We have watched the process of cartridge making in the largest ammunition factory in this country, taking note of every stage of manufacture of the cases, and thereafter inspecting the process of loading these cases by machinery, throughout a long day, and subsequently we were permitted to view the loading-room of one of the best-known firms of London gun-makers, comparing the two processes at our leisure. In the factory the case was made as well as loaded; in the London workshop the latter operation alone was to be witnessed, for there is no gun-maker who could afford to make his own cases at the price he can purchase them from any one of the three wholesale case-makers, two of them in London and one at Birmingham.

In explanation of this it may be stated that the machinery used in the manufacture of cartridge-cases is very expensive. The full equipment of the ammunition factory we refer to, with machinery for making sporting cases alone, could not possibly have cost less than £50,000, and probably a good deal more than that amount. It is no light undertaking, therefore, to embark in the case-making business; a large capital is necessary for its proper and profitable conduct, and hence the reason that only three cartridge factories are now to be found in these islands, whose only competitors are American and continental cartridge manufacturers, and whose profits consequently are very large.

These factories supply all gun-makers with their cases, and many gun-makers with their fully-loaded cartridges. One or two gun-makers, indeed, of good standing never load a cartridge on their London premises; they buy them ready-made from the factories, charging the same price, however, as do other gun-makers who take the trouble to load for themselves. But in our experience there can be no comparison in reliability between the factory-loaded cartridge even of the best components, and the cartridge loaded on the premises of a high-class London gun-maker, whose loaders take pains over their work, and have years of experience to fall back upon in their execution of it. In many gun-making establishments these experienced loaders are already at work preparing for the demand which by experience they know will arise in July and August for the best ammunition, loaded by hand, that is to say by hand with the assistance of the best appliances known for cartridge loading. The factory cartridge is also loaded with every possible appliance for saving labour that the engineer can manufacture, but the most skilled inventor is powerless to invent machinery that can supply the place of the brain of the experienced hand-loader, whose touch even is a trained one, acting in conjunction and sympathy with his mind, devoted to his work almost all the year round. In the factory the loading, as we have said, is mainly done by the aid of machinery of a very expensive description, with the help of a number of girls paid by the number of cartridges they turn out. Women and girls, in fact, are almost the sole employees in the large cartridge factories, their wages, no doubt, being less than half those that would have to be paid to men or boys. Girls are found to be not only cheap, but attentive, in these factories, studying their work and attending to it in a manner that boys could never be trained to do, and earning very large profits for the fortunate shareholders.

But turning out loaded cartridges by the million, they cannot compete in point of excellence and reliability with the hand-loaded ammunition, manufactured by the first-rate gun-maker in London, whose orders are sufficient to keep his loaders fully occupied from year's end to year's end. He is quite entitled to his longer price per hundred, for he pays good wages to his experienced men, and we have noted that he takes extra precautions in the testing of every single cartridge before it is put up for delivery, precautions which it would not pay the factory proprietor to adopt. The latter supplies all and sundry, as well as the gun trade. Ironmongers are really his best clients, because they are glad to be saved all the trouble of loading, which they do not really understand, and the expense of retaining an experienced loader, which their turnovers in ammunition would not justify.

But it is very hard upon the persevering provincial gun-maker to find his cartridge trade cut into by his two neighbours, the ironmonger and the grocer, or it may be the chemist or oil merchant, who are supplied by the wholesalers at the same prices with cartridges that with his limited trade he cannot beat, and who are supplying them to shooters at a bare 10 per cent. profit, or less, on wholesale prices. The ironmonger who sells factory-loaded cartridges is the man who is slowly ruining the provincial gun-maker, who used to depend on his ammunition trade to pay his rent and expenses. Companies are said to have no consciences, and the wholesale manufacturing companies are not disposed to recognise the claim of the country gun-maker to any exceptional treatment in the way of prices. Anybody in trade they will supply with ammunition on wholesale terms for cash or credit, and we have heard of traders joining together simply for the purpose of ordering sufficient ammunition at wholesale prices to suffice for their own shooting. It is very difficult, of course, for the wholesale companies to draw the line, to distinguish between the *bona fide* trader who buys to sell again, and the trader who has his own shooting, and has a few friends who also have bits of shooting and like to discharge cheap cartridges when they are to be easily procured. We have heard such stories told by provincial gun-makers surprised at the falling off in their cartridge trade, but we could scarcely believe them. Though, after all, in these democratic days, when everybody shoots, and everybody knows all about shooting, there could not have been very much to be surprised at in people getting their ammunition in the cheapest market.

But, as we have stated at the commencement of these notes, the price of cartridges hereafter is to be raised to gun-maker and ironmonger alike, and it is more than probable that the consumer, as usual, will have to come to the rescue by paying an enhanced price. As we write, the London gun-makers are holding a meeting on the subject, the result of which is in doubt. There can be no question that they have been taken by surprise, they are being hit between wind and water. They are at the mercy of the three wholesale firms who make their cartridge-cases, for without them they could not manufacture ammunition for their customers except by the use of foreign and inferior cases, which sportsmen might object to being supplied with. For there is no doubt that the English case is unsurpassed. It is a credit to the firms that turn it out, and they are well entitled to a good profit on its manufacture. There is, in fact, nothing made in England that we know of cheaper than a good case of the Eley, Kynoch, or



Joyce make, which does not cost the gun-maker much more than a farthing. The profit is made by the labour-saving machinery that enables the cases to be turned out so cheaply, and that profit on the whole amounts to a very large annual sum, so large, indeed, that it is thought the companies concerned could very well have stood the rise in metal without troubling their customers by a rise in price. There is, however, a silver lining to the cloud, if cloud it can be called. One of the conditions of the combination, we understand, is the production of a cartridge for clay-bird shooting, the pet sport of the ammunition trade,

at a price cheaper than ever before. Clay-bird shooting, apparently, is to be favoured exceptionally in the circumstances, and we are glad to hear it for the sake of clay-bird shooters. If this be so, and if we know anything of sporting procedure, there is likely to be a very large accession to the ranks of clay-bird shooters within a very short period. Perhaps it was for this end that the recent rise in cartridge-cases was announced, and, if so, we can only commend the announcement, even if it threatened to do evil that good might come.

NEVIS.

## THE INTER-VARSITY SPORTS.

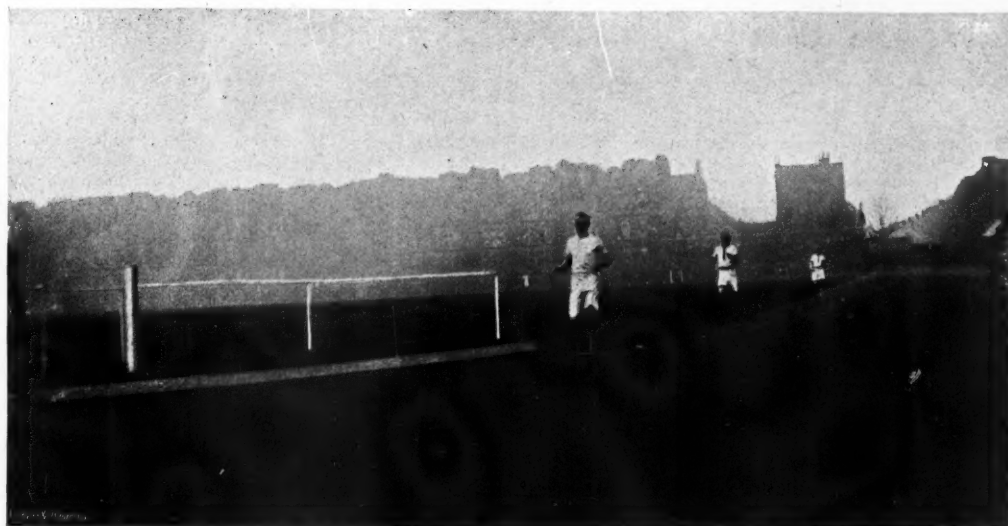
THE increase in the number of events in the Inter-University Sports from nine to ten will be generally thought a piece of foolishness, as the first result of the innovation was a drawn match—only the second instance in the history of the meeting. There are, however, worse things than absence of defeat, and future good may be expected to come from the temporary compromise. At any rate, everyone agreed that the new half-mile was one of the best races of the day, both as a spectacle and a performance. The weather was kinder than our fears, but the path was as bad as it could be—very soft on the top, and beneath hard as the nether millstone. This told most heavily in the longer races, which was the greater pity, as Hunter, the Cambridge president, was capable of running a very fast mile. The three mile, the last event on the programme, decided the result, which is as it should be, but the misfortunes of her two first strings left Oxford small hopes of the race. However, Workman would have wanted a good deal of beating on the day. There were some hopes that Thomas, who hails from the Principality, might repeat his late performance of running the 100yds. in 10sec., but again the state of the path precluded the possibility of the feat. The record was to come in another race.

With the exception of a champion or two from Nottingham,

the Universities have always held a monopoly of hurdle-racing. This year they surpassed themselves. Parkes, the amateur champion, was beaten by several yards in the extraordinary time of 16sec. Considering that the winner, Paget-Tomlinson, started badly and did not take the lead till the seventh hurdle, the time may be regarded as quite unique in the history of athletics.

The only other startling event was the long jump, in which of Vassall's three leaps the shortest was 22ft. 11½in., and the longest 23ft. 3in., a consistency of excellence quite unprecedented. The sports were marked further by an innovation in the rules for the hammer and weight, now on all fours with the championship regulations. But in spite of the narrowing of the circle, the hammer was thrown further and with more science than has been the case for years. Mind recovered its supremacy over matter. Of the weight the less said the better.

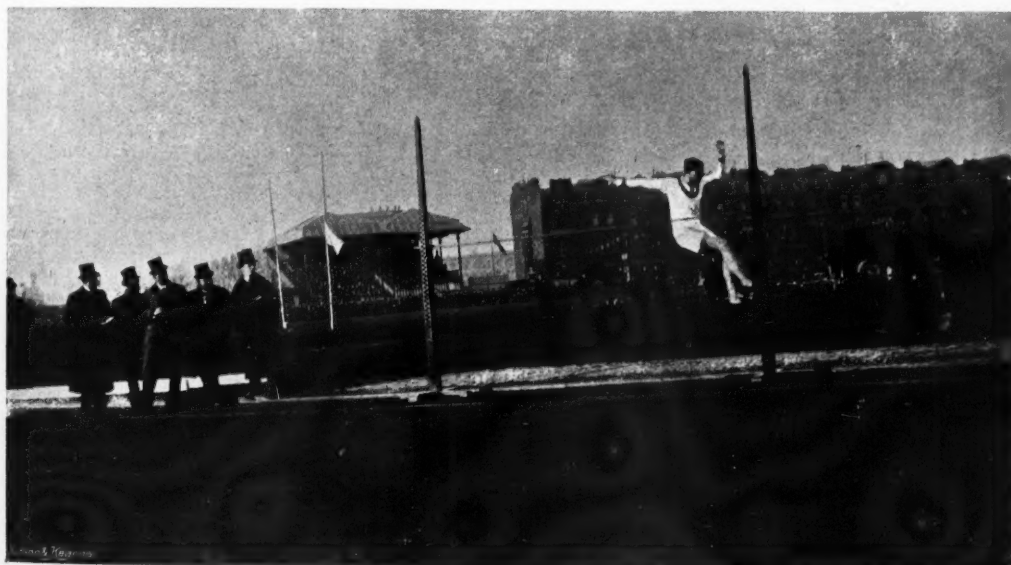
A very pleasant dinner held in the evening, at which H. C. L. Tindall took the chair, was chiefly remarkable for a delightful speech from Mr. Sherrall, of Yale. He told two amusing stories, punned neatly on the names of the rival presidents, Mr. Hunter and Mr. Vassall, and gave welcome hopes of some more international contests. Parliamentary duties, to the general disappointment, hurried away the Attorney-General too soon for the expected speech.



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GRAHAM FINISHES IN THE NEW EVENT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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THE HIGH JUMP.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

## THE EASTER LIFTING: A Scene of Country Life.

THE day was Easter Monday. The meadow on the north end of the square stone parish church (declining westerly down to a puny brooklet, fringed with foxglove and sprawling over innumerable stones, washed round and white by the action of the water) was the recreation ground or fair field of the inhabitants of Honington. Here they all assembled on their fair days, old and young, rich and poor, strong and ill, comely and ugly, plump and lean, learned and simple. Under these spreading elms, barely in leaf at Easter, but making a thick covering thereafter until the November rook again hangs like a scarecrow upon the naked bough, each year was held the village fair—the

miniature of the Arwick "statts," the counterpart of the Good Friday fair held at the foot of the Newbold Hills in the neighbouring town of "gay Brookington."

This year the season was early. Everything was forward. The summer looked as if it had come. A sure sign that it was near at hand, if not already present, was to be seen in the thin blouses of many colours—white, check, cream, pink, sky-blue, lavender, and red—worn by the village girls with ease and adornment, and without fear of catching a chill.

Signs of the day and the fair appeared as early as five o'clock that morning.

A rumbling of cart-wheels along the narrow lanes brought the joyful intelligence to the rising lasses that a circus of hobby-horses was gravitating to the field. Many a pair of bright, roguish eyes peeped over tatted curtains at the covered waggon as it passed the thatched homesteads. Later the swing-boats, chartered to carry the lover and his lass, put in an appearance upon the scene. When the clock of St. Margaret's Church chimed the hour of ten the mead was a veritable fair—conical tents, smirched with wear and foul weather, jutting upward between the shows, the snooting galleries, and the people belonging to them, like the wigwams of a small military encampment.

The Lifting Fair was a great time for the villagers of Honington. It was a break in their lives—monotonous lives some would call them, but which did not seem to be very monotonous to those who lived them. A welcome break, nevertheless, was the village fair. It brought all their hearts and spirits together at the same time. It made an exhibition of finery which was only rarely seen by rustic eyes, and of which the show in the parish church on a Sunday was but a very faint reflection. Moreover, and this is what was most welcomed by the younger inhabitants, it brought the lively and buoyant of both sexes into close contact, and paved the way for "askings" and subsequent marriages.

And so the morning of the Lifting had come, a beautiful, golden morning, an August day in April.

Marina Rarf, the daughter of the shepherd at the Knob Farm (a building standing upon an elevation slightly to the north-west of Honington church, where conical ricks peeped up amid the forks of apple and pear trees, as yet bare of leaf or blossom), looked very charming and fair-like in the doorway of her father's cottage, which fronted the fair field where the lifting was to be conducted, and in anticipation of which her little heart was gaily beating. The tendrils of a yellow jasmine, which clung round the thatched door-porch, made a veritable frame in which Rina was the picture. There were no green leaves upon the plant as yet, but the trailing twigs were full with the little star-like yellow blossoms of that handsome climber, and these arching round the doorway, with Rina as a centre-piece, formed one of the prettiest scenes within the range of the vision.

The centre-piece wore a white pique dress, the produce of her own hands, flounced gaily up the front in the manner which women loved when skirts were so worn, not so very long ago, for the fashions of the fair seem to repeat themselves about every seven years. Her bodice was also trimmed with divers pretty devices which added to the fulness of her already well-developed figure. Rina, you see, was country born and country bred, save for intermittent flights to "gay Brookington," where the waxen woman in the smart hairdresser's window sets the fashion (though not the form) for many a rustic wench, and was blessed with a talent for contentment and for making good use of the food with which God had provided her—the plain, wholesome fare of a well-to-do peasant.

Consequently at her seventeenth birthday Rina Rarf was exhibiting a person neat, plump, and comely, and full of those protruding graces which foreshadow an early matronhood. Her additional attraction in the matter of dress was a pair of white sleeves starched with such energy and enthusiasm that they stood out upon her arms like huge inflated bladders, which the point of a pin, craftily applied, would soon bring down to grief and limps. But without any of these adornments to the person of "the fair" (which are prized by the fair even more than the comeliness which they are supposed to adorn) Rina Rarf would have drawn upon her any eye of any age between fifteen and fifty—the male eye especially, but not infrequently the female eye—out of real complacency at looking upon her numerous charms, or of jealousy at the unequal distribution of personal beauty.

And there she stood with eager eyes watching the growing crowd, and particularly the movements of a young man in a snuff-coloured tweed suit, with buff leather leggings up to his knees, and a light cap upon his head—a well-knit, well-looking young man—a farmer's son, to judge by appearances.

By the manner in which she watched this young man, any close observer would easily tell that she took more than a passing interest in him. The eye does not linger long upon objects it does not love. A young woman at the love-enchanted age of Rina Rarf would not waste her glances upon subjects of less moment to her. There must be a charm in them for sweet seventeen, or the orbs of the lass would skim over them as lightly and disdainfully as a bee skims over the flower in which it knows there is no honey. Rina's eyes dwelt upon the young man; they were riveted upon him. She watched his every movement with the tension of a spring-gun waiting for the touch to send it off.

There was also another young man in the gathering upon whom Rina's eyes alighted, though not with such an attentive glance. He was of slightly coarser mould and meaner attire, having the appearance more of a farm-hand than a farmer's son, yet what he lacked in natural and sartorial graces was made up in the earnestness of his demeanour. The attention which Rina was bestowing upon the young farmer this farm-hand bestowed upon her. Round the upper part of the rim of a huge waggon-wheel he was surveying her with a deep and lively interest. But Rina's eyes lighted upon him with only a fleeting glance compared with the enduring look she vouchsafed to cast upon the other, a glance perhaps ardent enough for an old admirer whose charm had failed (being but a farm-hand) before the greater charm of a farmer's son.

"There's Wilfred," she called out in a subdued voice, with the sound of laughter in it, to someone in the room behind her. "He's looking for me; I know he is. He's bobbin' in an' out o' the fair like a sparrow in a chicken coop. Oh! he sees me now. An' there's Kit Woodgrass, too. They be comin' this way to lift me; I know they be. Let me hide somewhere. Where can I—where can I?"

Rina immediately disappeared from the doorway, like a picture surreptitiously taken from its frame, and left the space shorn of its chiefest charm. Ere she had been concealed from the exterior view for about the lapse of two minutes (so eager were the more youthful swains of the fair to see some sport) the two young men, followed by a tail of the flower of courageous rusticity, rushed through the gathering towards the cottage. The young farmer, designated "Wilfred" by Rina, led the way, like the leader of men that he should have been; and the farm-hand, Kit, came close behind.

In colour they were the exact contrast to one another. Wilfred was fair, with the light hair, blue-grey eyes, and the red cheeks which go with the numerous other adornments of Saxon humanity. As he ran, his cheeks, which were always naturally ruddy, heightened to the red hue of a perfectly ripe russet apple, and, with the signs of excitement attending the chase, he looked the picture of health—equal to a race or a sprinting match on the green with the best of them there.

Kit was dark, his complexion brown and swarthy from life-long exposure to the elements and the variability of the weather. In build he was far less graceful than Wilfred, being somewhat more bulky in frame and disclosing in general appearance the physical legacies transmitted to him from a long line of

rustic ancestors who had followed the calling of Abel. At his present age, however, there was more than a suggestion of comeliness about him, and his brown eyes—large, soft, dark, and glancing as a woman's—together with the happy smile that habitually graced his face, were charms in their way which sometimes won more than the fleeting attention of the young maidens of Honington.

These two young men were running with much swiftness of foot towards Rina's cottage. It seemed a race between them of something more than mere physical speed. The two led—Wilfred a yard or two in front of Kit. The others came some distance in the rear, like the tail of the hunt, with but a faint enthusiasm in the sport compared with that of the two leaders, and seemingly with the knowledge that there were really but two competitors for the honour of lifting and kissing Rina Rarf.

When within a few yards of the cottage Wilfred turned round and faced the runners.

"The first catch the first lift and kiss?" he cried, in a merry voice. "An' only the one who catches her is to hev 'em—eh, boys? That's fair?"

"Oh! hey, hey," the others replied; but Kit did not speak.

The tone of Wilfred was almost the tone of command. All the young men but one recognised it as such. Wilfred Sheldon was a somewhat important figure in Honington society. He was the son, the only child, of Farmer Sheldon of the Manor Farm; he was "in with" the Squire and the Vicar; was captain of the local cricket and football clubs; a yeoman of the crack regiment of Warwickshire Cavalry; and otherwise a well-known and looked-up-to young man—a cut above the run of Honington rusticity. The majority of the people in the village took their word from Wilfred. The only one who did not was Kit Woodgrass, the under-shepherd at the Manor Farm, the dependent, so to speak, of Wilfred Sheldon. He made no reply, but ran on in dogged silence, though with a bright, hopeful face and flowing hair.

There were two doors to Rina Rarf's cottage—one at the front on the east side, the other at the north end, which led out to a sloping green pasture, taking a downward course to the puny streamlet which ran through the village and under the bridge fronting the Red Lion. Precisely at the moment when Wilfred reached by a little less than a yard the front door of the cottage, the fluttering of a white skirt, like a flag in the breeze, caught the eager eyes of Kit, flashing down on the north side of the house. He felt instinctively that it was Rina. She had indeed escaped by the northern door, and was endeavouring to elude the vigilance of her pursuers by flying to the water's edge, where she could conceal herself in one of the hollow willow trees growing there.

To see her flying out into the open like a startled hare was a challenge to catch her, and the eye of the under-shepherd no sooner caught sight of the fluttering white skirt than he made a lightning curve, and darted down the green slope with the celerity of a greyhound just let loose from the slips. His movement was observed by Wilfred, who was at that moment entering the front doorway of the cottage. In an instant he doubled with a bound, taking in the situation at a glance; and thereafter it was a trial of speed and skill between the two men, the under-shepherd leading by many yards, and being, as things seemed, the one most likely to have the first catch, and the first lift and kiss.

Rina headed for the river, pealing with laughter and a few little fluty shrieks; feigning to be fearful of being caught, yet fluttering with the excitement of expectant and known delights. The river was fringed with wide, stunted willow trees, growing in all manner of quaint and curious positions a yard or two from the edge of the water. Many of these were riven, and gaping all down the trunk, and would afford a secure hiding-place to anyone who wished to be concealed, providing that he or she were ensconced there before the intention was divined by those in pursuit. Rina was making for one of these natural willow arbour, and had hoped to conceal herself there before her whereabouts had been discovered. But she was too late. Kit was fast gaining upon her, though she herself was fleet of foot, and Wilfred was coming on behind with a flying impetus, evidently vexed beyond measure that the under-shepherd had obtained the better of him at the finishing touch, and was within an ace of catching her.

Whether it was by wilful design, which rarely gives the palm to the deserving one, or whether it was an exhibition of that pretty winning charm belonging to women, which always runs counter to the hopes and wishes of the male hunter after hearts and kisses—certain it is that when Rina, catching a quick glance backward, saw the under-shepherd, with his hand almost upon, indeed touching, her skirt, she uttered a little shriek of petulance, disappointment, and dismay, and doubled with the rapidity of a hard-pressed hare, running directly into the arms of Wilfred, which naturally opened to receive her.

"First catch, first kiss," cried the exultant young farmer, kissing her at once, against the rules of the custom which provided that the kiss be given in public—in the open fair, and not in a fair coomb of the landscape, with only a few looking on. "You've led us a pretty little chase, Rina, lass, an' I'll lift ye all the way back now. Dash me, I will that."

Suiting the action to the word, he threw one arm round her waist, and lifted her in his arms lengthwise, almost before she had time to offer any protest.

"Oh! Wilfred—Will, dear, you'll drop me," she cried, laughing gaily, and laying her head on his shoulder to hide her confusion. "I'm too heavy for you; I know I am. Let me down—let me down till we get there."

"When we get there, Rina, I will," he answered, bravely, trudging up the green bank with his fair load, "but not before, by the arms o' me."

And he did not. He bore his armful of prettiness, clothed with starched frills and laces, right into the midst of the fair, there gave her another graceful kiss, and set her down rosy with blushes, her eyes sparkling with delight, and some embarrassment at the cheers and compliments of the crowd. It was the old Easter custom of "lifting," a form of endearment between the sexes once extensively practised, and still in force in some of the sequestered villages of Warwickshire. A relic of barbarism, you say, with an affected attempt at being fastidious. Not at all. A very pretty custom indeed, as you would say if you saw it.

GEORGE MORLEY.

## Our Portrait Illustration.

MRS. ATHERTON, whose portrait forms our frontispiece this week, is well known in Society. She is the wife of Major Atherton, of the 12th Royal Lancers, and the daughter of the late Sir Edward Dean Pail, Bart.





THE present article, though dealing objectively with mines, is absolutely negative so far as the interests of the speculating public are concerned. The vast mineral wealth of British Columbia is an established fact, and the subject has resolved itself into a mere question of ways and means. The extraction of the precious metals may be viewed as if it were a manufacturing industry, and this should indicate that it provides openings enabling men of different acquirements to make a living. Mining is, in other words, an important factor in both sociology and economics. Our interest in these affairs depends on the attraction which mineral wealth offers to emigration, and raises the enquiry whether any branch of mining opens up a career to the class in which we are interested.

In the old days of gold-digging, when men went to work with pick and shovel, and washed the pay-dirt in rockers and pans, the field offered an equal chance to all comers. Success was purely a matter of "luck," and no special skill or even knowledge was required. Wherever this state of things exists, the district is called a poor man's country. But as the field gets

taken up, another factor is introduced, and the influence of capital is felt in a variety of ways. Claims which were staked by the first arrivals are sold to those who come in later bringing money with them. The old mining hands who reached the country first selected the best ground, and the remainder is sold to the "tender-foot" who, having been attracted by newspaper reports, arrives fresh from the old country with money to invest. An ingenuity worthy of romance is displayed in the dodges and tricks resorted to in order to dispose

of worthless ground, and the victims offer themselves only too readily, knowing that the people at home would not believe in them if they were not quick in reporting favourably of a purchase in a country represented as full of gold. People styling themselves "mining engineers" are to be found in every camp, and they know their prey by the British dress and manner, allied to an absurd outfit and general helplessness.

On the trails into the North, men with no training in pioneer or exploratory work are struggling along at the present time, and parties come to grief solely because of their entire and total ignorance of everything required to ensure success. Some of them are town-bred sons of the city, others are gentleman-farmers or Army failures, or the scarcely less ignorant so far as mountain work goes—ex-mounted policemen. Perhaps not one of them has ever been on a trail before, and thus strong men will wear themselves out on a journey which a woman might perform with ease were she properly directed. Probably the first misfortune is that they lose their horses, sometimes because

the animals stray and they do not know how to look for them. After that they tie the horses up, and consequently the poor brutes die of starvation. Then they miss the trail, which is not to be wondered at, for very often a most experienced eye is required to hit the indications, although to one accustomed to the work there may be no difficulty at all. In this way weeks may be lost in accomplishing a few miles, and the risk is really serious, for Cassiar and the North-West are vast and solitary regions. At first the novelty of the life is attractive. It is tempting to shoot, and they forget that ammunition cannot be replaced; or they fish by way of change, and spend "a good time," consuming their provisions and forgetting the object of their journey. Then one of them, getting venturesome, goes shooting alone—and then comes the beginning of the end. They start out the usual type of utterly inexperienced young Englishmen, nice-looking and well dressed, but "whose only idea of hardship is to wear a wide hat and top-boots." And over their return journey, when broken, dispirited, and disheartened they struggle back, the whole of their British pluck comes out—their

heroic patience, their cheerful endurance, their faithful kindness—as, scraped and cut, torn and starved, the remnant of them regain their base.

It cannot be stated too plainly that before going upon trails to the North some time should be spent in the comparatively civilised parts, such as the Kootenays, learning to pack goods into mining camps, and going short expeditions with experienced and trustworthy guides. The blame for disaster and failure cannot be ascribed to the country. It rests rather with the people at home who send out their boys—brave

and determined, no doubt, but quite unqualified in all other respects to make a living out of the mining industry.

Prospecting in Kootenay, Slocan, and Vancouver Island attracts some Englishmen. The life is the profession of a special class of men, who, as a rule, begin it very early. In spite of the hardships and privations which even the most experienced veterans must meet with, the life is so fascinating that once embraced it is seldom relinquished. Yet very few prospectors become rich, and many sink into such poverty that a home for them has been established at Kamloops, in British Columbia.

The work necessitates days and even weeks spent on the "hills," as the mountains are called, and the hills become to the prospector what the sea is to the sailor. At all times these men may be seen going or returning on their strange quest—usually two together, sometimes more, but to go alone is held to double the risk. They generally start with their goods strapped to their backs, though in some cases the load may be



A TEMPORARY BASE.

transferred to a cayuse or broncho, as the half-wild horse of the country is called. The prospector takes his gun, some ammunition, a small axe or pick, his blankets, cooking-pot, matches, and provisions, consisting of beans, bacon, tea, rolled oats, and tobacco. At a likely place he camps for the night. He has selected the spot as one to which Indian tradition points as associated with indications of precious metals. The next morning he starts hunting for traces of minerals. A search even of weeks may result in no find of any consequence, or it may be that some loose, transported fragments of rock may be found bearing traces of gold, but having no connection with any part of the surrounding rock. Or, again, an outcrop may be discovered, but of so delusive a character as to be worse than useless. Only in rare cases can indications be so distinctly traced by the prospector as to enable him to decide that his find is "true"—perhaps only once in several hundred "prospects." The forest is dense, and often the only means of getting through it is by following a small stream or burn which has worked a groove for itself between the rocks. At night the prospectors camp, light a fire, cook their food, and sleep in their blankets.

There are two common causes of danger. One is that under some conditions a man may lose his foothold; the other is shortage of provisions, and then, if the ammunition is exhausted too, it is a case of starving till the base be regained. Sometimes a temporary base is formed on the shore of a lake, where a passing steamer can be hailed, whose captain will "hold her nozzle ag'in the bank," put down bags of flour, and, perhaps, pick up letters deposited in old candle-boxes or under stones.

The prospectors are so keen in their pursuit that they will face starvation sooner than return empty-handed to the people in the towns. There is an admirable spirit in them, enabling them to face risks and intense suffering rather than the slur of acting shabbily or with apparent cowardice. Therefore it not unfrequently follows that on their return they give too glowing an account of their prospect—it may be said that they live on a prospect; they believe so strongly in the golden future of the rock, a little specimen of which they bring with them, that the mining experts who await them in the townships are well advised to be sceptical as to reports. After a man has lived for days on a handful of rolled oats and a few wild berries,



PACK-TRAIN CONVEYING ELECTRICAL PLANT.

and has been glad at last to catch a chipmunk and eat it raw, sooner than return with a blank, it is not difficult to understand that a very small find causes him such intense satisfaction that he easily exaggerates its value. The ground reported upon, even if the specimen assays well, must be visited and thoroughly examined in every respect before purchase can be talked about or development considered. Even if the rock be encouraging after examination, and the ore be proved to a certain depth at a payable rate, there are other considerations, such as transport facilities, water power, the proximity to mills or smelters, which must be reckoned in estimating the value of a property. Thus the prospector may receive, after all, but a meagre return for his labour and risk, although he may actually obtain the full market value, and in some cases even more.

The idea that colonial life offers a career for which special training and preparation is essential, is as yet so new that to most parents equipment does not extend beyond an elaborate and frequently very unsuitable outfit. If our colonies are to be anything to us we must regard them as offering careers in no way inferior to the professions at home; and just as boys require special training for the Navy, the Army, the Bar, and medicine, so should they be educated for the precise line which has been selected for them in the colonies. Then they must be sent abroad, not as gilded paupers to live on outdoor relief in the shape of remittances from home, but as capable men, well-trained and specially adapted to play their part in developing the colony which they have selected for their future home.

In no walk of life do the above remarks apply with greater force than in the case of mining engineers. The fact is patent that the great increase in the use of machinery in all enterprises in the present day places very great power and opportunity in the hands of the men of that profession, and consequently it becomes attractive to smart young fellows. A character for honourable dealing and honesty is worth a fortune to a man in a profession which offers such chances for wasteful procedure. But how greatly enhanced will be the value which always attaches to a gentleman, if in addition to character he is equipped with a thoroughly sound and scientific training. Let no man in a business such as engineering despise the qualities attaching to birth and breeding. Wherever we go in the Empire we find that the sons of gentlemen (for some unknown reason) possess the power of initiating, and of controlling, directing, and managing other men, to very high degree. It is said that Sir W. Roberts-Austen is wont to remark to his most



STEAM DRILL AT WORK.



promising young men: "I can teach you how to deal with metals, but you have got to manage men." And this power of wielding authority with ease cannot be imparted in a purely technical course of instruction.

For an ordinary gentleman's son a thorough training in mining engineering, and the acquisition of a certificate from some credited school or university, will be of immense service. There is an admirable education to be obtained at McGill University, in Montreal. In all branches of applied science the teaching at McGill leaves nothing to be desired. Besides McGill, Canada possesses a fine college at Kingston, whose boys have frequently furnished officers for the Royal Engineers—a notable example being the engineer of the line laid down by Lord Kitchener in Egypt.

For English boys an excellent training may be obtained at the Royal College of Science and Royal School of Mines at South Kensington, supplemented as they are by the unrivalled collection at the adjoining museum. This opportunity offers a special attraction for parents who do not wish to send their boys abroad at too early an age. The course is three years for those who wish to become Associates. The work of the school is arranged in such a manner as to permit the student to concentrate his attention upon one subject at a time, and he is never occupied with the subjects of more than two divisions in the same term. By far the greater part of his time is devoted to practical work in the laboratories under the demonstrators and assistants. From the special nature of the training it will be seen that a sound general education should certainly precede such a course. Nothing for this purpose could be better than the usual curriculum of one of our universities. If a boy has taken his degree as Bachelor of Science he might very advantageously pass through a year's course at the Royal School of Mines.

Local conditions, which can only be learnt in the country where the theory has to be put into practice, next demand attention. The full-fledged certificated mining engineer will still have to observe the strategical features of the country very closely. To the lay mind the conviction is very soon driven home that in few professions is the distance between theory and practice greater than in engineering. A boy who leaves the most thorough school, and has grasped the whole theory, may begin and go on building bridges successfully, and suddenly make a stupendous failure because of something in the conditions of the country for which he did not allow. In the same way the mining engineer



THE CARIBOO STAGE ROAD.

may know theoretically all about surveying and timbering and preventing the influx of water, and yet abnormal conditions, as to the nature of the deposit or the mode of the association of the ore, may lead him into serious perplexity.

Mining is frequently a matter of luck in one or more of its stages, and in mining camps chance and hazard in the form of dice and cards have a ritual of their own. Many things in life are accidental, but in no walk of life do previous training, character, and experience count for more than in all branches of practical mining. The boy whose parents absolutely cannot afford him collegiate training should at least enter an engineer's shop and learn fitting and repairing of machinery. Certainly one way to approach British Columbia is in the garb of a working man, and thus acquire practical knowledge of the country. It is a matter for sincere regret that mining, especially where gold is concerned, kindles an enthusiasm amounting almost to madness. So long as gold is obtained, its cost is forgotten; only to those who have counted the weight in the scale on the other side does gold appear to have a price. And in that balance are found, alas, how many failures and disappointments, how many ruined lives, wrecked fortunes and broken hearts!—the result of confidence rashly staked on "luck."

FRANCES MACNAB.

## LAKE VYRNWY AND ITS TROUT.



J. Maclardy.

MIMIC BAYS AND CAPES.

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FISHERMEN two, we preferred an angling expedition to the glories of the Diamond Jubilee. Corwen was our destination, and the river Dee the original objective of our expedition. On beholding it, sanguine expectations faded away, for the river-bed appeared to consist chiefly of dry gravel. What little water flowed through it was clear as crystal, and though, for aught we knew, the trout might find pleasure in the sight of our artificial flies, it was exceedingly improbable that they would experience any desire to annex them. But if the river trout were coy, we might still woo with success those that dwelt in lakes. At eight o'clock next morning we took train to Bala, and, walking up to the hotel, requested the host to forward us on to Lake Vyrnwy with all possible despatch.

Bala Lake, otherwise Llyn Tegid, is a picturesque sheet of water, surrounded by mountains, in which—the lake, not the mountains—heavy trout are sometimes captured. It also contains pike, perch, roach, and

gwyniad, a fish which, I believe, is not found elsewhere in Great Britain. According to "Pennant's Tour in Wales," written in 1778, "pike have been caught" (in Llyn Tegid) "of twenty-five pounds, a trout of twenty-two, a perch of ten, and a gwyniad of five." No exception can be taken to the pike or the trout, though the latter must have been a lusty specimen. But a perch scaling ten pounds! Either the species has degenerated of late years, or "fish stories" were already in vogue at the end of the last century. A "gwyniad of five," also, is rather a large order. In his "History of British Fishes," the late Frank Buckland gave the average length of the gwyniad as 10in. to 12in.

We started from Bala in a waggonette drawn by a pair of short-legged bay cobs, standing about 15h. 2in.; and the serviceable qualities of our horses were very apparent as they toiled up a narrow mountain road. At length the weary ascent came to an end. If anything, the hill was steeper on the far side, and only horses trained to the work could have held back the heavy waggonette. It was a relief to turn into the broad, level, and well-kept road which borders the lake. A fresh breeze ruffled its surface, and here and there we detected the splash of a rising trout. Boats, with anglers busily engaged in casting, drifted broadside to the waves, and we rejoiced that circumstances had induced us to visit Lake Vyrnwy. On arriving at the hotel, our first care was to enquire for a boat and man; our second, to order luncheon, and, having despatched this with hearty appetites, we sallied forth to begin the campaign. We soon made two discoveries. First, that the rise which had been in evidence as we drove towards the hotel had now ceased; and, second, that when the Vyrnwy trout were not rising to themselves, they would not look at artificial flies. This is by no means invariably the case on the lochs of Scotland; presumably the Welsh trout are more dainty, and also may be better supplied in the matter of natural insects. The breeze died away towards evening, and still our baskets were innocent of trout. Our boatman began to show signs of uneasiness. When other craft came within hail, he conversed briefly in Welsh with the rival boatmen, and we noticed that his dejection was more apparent after these encounters. He watched our operations attentively, but with evident doubt, and it was clear that our angling skill was being tried in the balance.

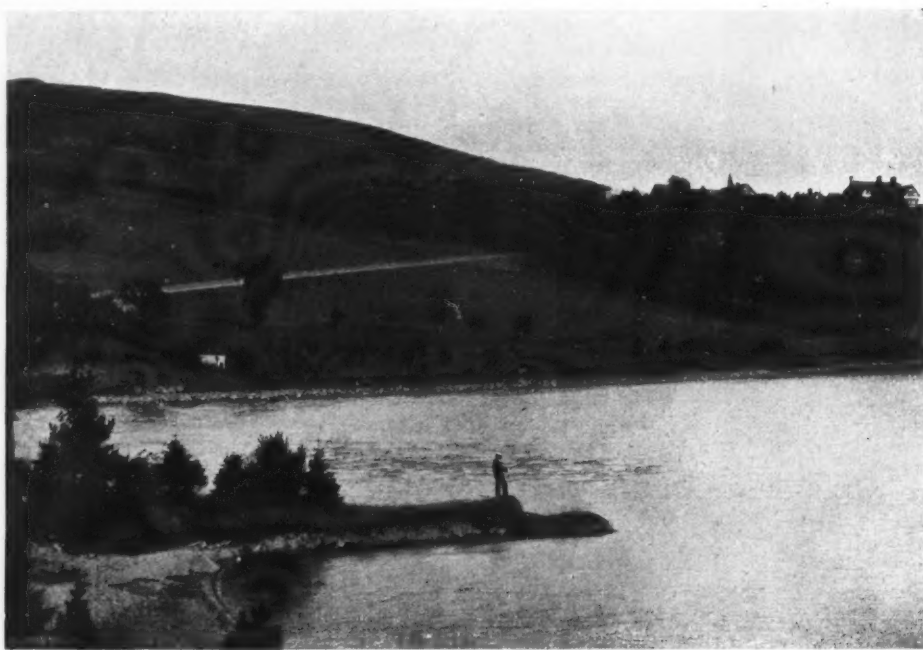
Scarcely a ripple now showed on the surface, and we were becoming weary of casting in such unpromising circumstances, when at last came the welcome sound of a rising trout. Glancing round to locate the spot, we noticed the unmistakable gleam of fish moving far out in the lake, and, as nothing was to be seen in our vicinity, we decided to pull in that direction. On reaching the place we found the surface simply covered with dead flies, chiefly red ants, on which the trout were feeding greedily. A hurried search through the fly-books discovered some neatly-tied flies of the right pattern, and one was quickly attached to each of our lines. But, lightly as we cast over the rising fish, the manœuvre had no other result than to put them down, and, when allowed to sink, the artificial red ants met with no better success. Meanwhile, flop-flop sounded all round the boat, in a manner most tantalising. Changes of flies brought no change for the better. Whether presented dry or wet, floating or beneath the surface, the result was always the same—that is to say, *nil*. The shades of evening were now gathering, and a corresponding gloom settled on the brow of our boatman. The rise gradually slackened, and, as the trout appeared to have satisfied their appetites, it occurred to us that our dinners likewise demanded attention; so we rowed leisurely towards the hotel, pausing by the way to cover rising fish.

The circling rings caused by a trout had not yet died

away, when my fly alighted near the spot. A travelling furrow showed in the smooth water, and in another second I had hooked the author of it; the steel-yard presently fixed its weight at a trifle under 1lb.—a pretty fish, in excellent condition. My companion, D—, had not handled a fly-rod for many years, and, seeing that the work in hand required some precision, he elected to be a spectator; a frame of mind to which, I fear, my selfish arguments assisted to bring him. It was, however, manifestly desirable, in the interests of the "bag," that the most practised hand should wield the rod, and in the circumstances a single angler had the best chance of success. The lake was smooth as a mirror. When a rise was seen within moderate range the boat was urged towards it as quickly and as quietly as possible. Then it was my business to "place" the fly, and it goes without saying that this had to be done with neatness and accuracy. This was no time for bungling; the slightest awkwardness in casting infallibly put down the trout. Two and a-half brace of good fish, weighing altogether about 4lb., lay in the well of the boat, when at length we decided that further efforts were useless, and rowed ashore. Our attendant said little, but the doubtful expression had vanished from his features, and his manner towards us had undergone a change. It had always been respectful, now it was almost genial. Open approval was too much to expect, but he gave us tacitly to understand that if we could catch trout on Lake Vyrnwy during a dead calm, we could not be altogether duffers.

This brief record of pleasant sport on a summer's evening may induce others to exploit for themselves the angling resources

of Lake Vyrnwy. As all the world knows, it is an artificial reservoir, and was constructed for the purpose of supplying the inhabitants of Liverpool with pure water. When the great stone embankment and the stone water-tower are hidden from view, a stranger would never suppose that the broad sheet of water before him was born of the genius of engineering. At intervals along the shore MIMIC BAYS AND CAPES succeed one another. Here the tiny waves lap about the base of tall cliffs; in



J. Maclardy.

A FAVOURITE CAST.

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another part clouds of March browns, duns, or alders hover under a fringe of bushes, and now and again the glance of a golden side shows through the dark water. The subdued murmur of mountain streams is in the air, and all around are the hills, tinged with purple near their summits, where the grouse crow among the heather, green and smiling on the slopes where the Welsh muttons are coming to maturity. Yet from certain signs might the keen observer suspect the artificial origin of the lake. Paths and cart-tracks vanish incontinently in the deeps; the fields which border the lake are divided haphazard, apparently without method. In some places fences stand but a few yards from the brink, and it seems strange to see a walled-in field 100yds. long by, perhaps, 5yds. in breadth. When the rising floods inundated the valley, submerging hamlets and farm-houses, churches and village ale-houses, they established, on reaching their limit, new and arbitrary bounds to cultivation. The cottages where erstwhile men and women lived and died in a little world of their own—their ambitions bounded by the mountains which hem in the valley—form now the haunts of trout. It is curious to be told by the boatman that you are "casting over the church"; that here—where you miss that big fellow; he came short—was a noted public-house, where, in days of construction, many a fierce fight was waged between pugnacious navvies.

The trout in Lake Vyrnwy average about three-quarters of a pound in weight, and they rise freely to the fly from the opening of the season until about the middle of June—April and May are the best months. Trout are reared artificially on a considerable scale, and thousands of fry are turned out every season;



whatever faults may be alleged against the Vyrnwy fishing, scarcity of trout is certainly not among them. Neither pure-bred Loch Levens nor the American brook trout (*S. Fontinalis*) have proved altogether satisfactory, better results being obtained from crosses between them and the native trout which dwelt in the stream formerly flowing through the valley. The common black palmer, not too bushy, and tied either with or without silver wire or tinsel, is about the most killing fly throughout the season, and the most successful anglers almost invariably have one pattern of this description on their casts. Other useful flies are the black and teal, claret and grouse, March brown, alder, Greenwell's Glory, Zulu, and hawthorn fly; the yellow dun and yellow Sally, also the green and mallard, kill well during June and July. When, several years ago, Lake Vyrnwy first became known as a trout water, ordinary loch flies, of the large size commonly employed in Scotland, proved most deadly; but as the fish became more educated it was found necessary to copy more exactly the natural insects on the water, especially in the matter of size. At the present time Nos. 6 and 1 will be found the most suitable sizes of hooks, although in rough weather flies of a size or two larger may be put up with advantage. The tackle should be as fine as is compatible with the weight and vigour of the trout, and on Lake Vyrnwy quick, though not too forcible, "striking" is of the utmost importance. The trout often rise well when the surface of the water is comparatively calm. Slowly they swim up from the deeps, and, whether it be through suspicion or want of appetite, certain it is that often they take but a gentle hold of the dainty morsel. The angler sees a slight swirl in the water, feels a quiet "pluck" at the line, and, accustomed to trout that rise more freely, he scarcely thinks it necessary to "strike" such a cautious customer. At night he returns home with, perhaps, two or three brace of nice trout, observes that



J. Maclardy.

## EVENING ON THE LAKE.

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the fish were "rising short" all day, and can scarcely believe his eyes when he observes the score or so of beauties that a more experienced angler has captured. "A sheer matter of luck," he opines. That may be so once in a way, but scarcely when the same thing happens day after day. Quick "striking," then, should be the rule on Lake Vyrnwy, and trout that rise to themselves should always be covered, as, during the height of the season, nine out of ten will take the artificial fly if it be the right size, is a fair imitation of the fly on the water, and is skilfully presented.

To show of what Lake Vyrnwy is capable, I may mention that on May 17th, 1897, Mr. R. L. Garnett killed with the fly forty-two trout, scaling 29lb., and last summer the same angler caught in one day twenty-four trout, weighing 17lb. The illustrations which accompany this article are reproduced from photographs taken by Mr. J. Maclardy, of Oswestry.

R. C. DRUMMOND.

## SAND AND SEAWEED.

**D**ONKEYS always flourish best near the coast, and meet with more consideration and better treatment there than elsewhere. There is a reason for everything, and the reason for the honour in which these useful little animals are held near salt water may be gathered partly from the views here shown. Donkeys are excellent climbers, have no nerves at all, and are particularly good as "pack-animals." They will carry a load in panniers, whether children, sand, or seaweed, quite out of proportion to their size, while their climbing power makes them particularly well suited for

scrambling up cliff paths from the beach. In South Devon, notably at Branscombe, there is a flourishing industry of potato-growing on the great cliffs which face the Channel. The Branscombe donkeys carry these potatoes up to the top of the cliffs, and carry manure down, besides drawing the early potatoes to the railway. The file of pack-donkeys shown in our first illustration are SAND CARRIERS on the coast of Cornwall. They are carrying sea sand along the beach, and will soon mount a steep defile in the cliffs, and toil up to the summit with their burden, which is used by the farmers to scatter on the land. "For a long time," writes the lady who has forwarded us these illustrations, "I could not imagine why the farmers wanted the sand, or of what use it could be in the fields. But I answered the question in remembering that the soil of Cornwall is singularly deficient in lime, and that this sand is almost entirely composed of broken shells, which are all lime." These donkeys work till the tide almost washes them off their legs, and then enjoy a rest till the ebb leaves the beach once more exposed.

The second scene is on the West Coast of Ireland, where the marine donkey shown is busy carrying SEAWEED from coast to farm. This is one of the very few instances in which the Western Irish show more thought than the English small farmer. We have seen hundreds of tons of seaweed rotting on the shore of the eastern end of the Isle of Wight, when it could easily have been brought up and used on the land, on corn-fields, and meadows of hungry soil actually touching the sea. Recent enquiry and experiment has shown that seaweed is nearly as useful as farmyard manure. On suitable soil, whether for grass or garden, it is first class, and we know one most prolific garden where scarcely any other fertiliser is used. In the Channel Islands, those models of thrifty and successful husbandry,



SAND CARRIERS



SEAWEED.

it is used in great quantities for growing early potatoes, asparagus, and for manuring the grass pastures and parsnip grounds—parsnips being the crop originally grown for extra food for the island cows.



THE MEZEREON.

WE were lately in a garden in which this fragrant *Daphne* had been planted in large beds. There were groups of it, and the air was filled with a sweet perfume exhaled from a thousand purplish flowers expanded upon the leafless stems. One loses much early spring beauty by not planting freely such a vigorous hardy shrub as this, a shrub that gives a glimmer of purple colour to the garden even in winter-time when the weather is mild, and the flowers are followed by crimson or yellow fruits. *D. Mezereum* is the commonest of the family, and may frequently be seen in cottage gardens, more often there, indeed, than in the larger domain. It grows between 3ft. and 4ft. in height, and likes a cool moist soil, and a position, too, screened from full sunshine, although shade is not essential. There are several varieties, differing in the depth of flower colouring, and as rich as any is *rubrum*, whilst *album* is white, and some are quite double. A very distinct form is *autumnalis*, also known as *grandiflorum*, which flowers in November, and is bolder than any of the others. The writer has planted the white *Mezereum* with success. It is a charming shrub, the flowers creamy white, very fragrant, and they make a brave show for weeks. The *Mezereons* fortunately remain long in beauty, and one must not forget the berry, either red or yellow being the colour of the fruit. A single bush of the *Daphne* is a pleasant feature in a garden, but this is a family to use freely, such as in bold groups, mixing other things with the plants. If a mass is planted, let the ground-work be of Pansies, or some bright-flowered annual, to maintain a display when the shrub is in leaf. The Winter Aconite is a pretty little bulb to plant amongst the *Daphne*, as its yellow flowers in their collar of green make a bright display in February or March.

## PLANTING WATER-LILIES.

The best month in the whole year for planting Water-lilies is April, and this note is therefore seasonable. Last autumn we wrote at some length concerning this beautiful race, especially of the hybrid *Nymphaeas*, which have added a new glory to English gardens. Water-gardening is as fascinating as any other phase, and those who still have bare margins to their lakes or flowerless surfaces should introduce groups of *Nymphaeas*, many of which are now reasonable in price. We shall not enter into details now about the kinds to plant, as they have been alluded to in previous issues, except to say that *Nymphaea Marliacea alba*, the noblest white hybrid Water-lily in existence;

*N. M. chromatella*, differing chiefly from *alba* in having soft primrose-coloured flowers; *N. M. rosea*, rose as its name suggests; and the flesh-pink *Carnea* form a very beautiful quartette to begin with, and all are reasonable in price. In selecting the position for the plants, avoid overhanging trees. Water-lilies are flowers of the sun, the petals expanding widely in the summer sunshine, and unfolding their rich tints of crimson, amber, and orange, with a medley of subtle and vivid shades. An expanded Water-lily flower is a revelation of glorious colouring. The plants should be near the sides, the smaller hybrids by the edge, as when thus placed they are more under control. Weeds may be readily removed, and rats and water-fowl kept under observation. Both are troublesome. When one wishes to gather the flowers, which are of great value for dinner-table and other decorations, long water-proof wading boots are necessary.

## HOW TO PLANT.

This is a simple matter. The best ponds are those with a muddy bottom, and *Nymphaeas* are seldom happy in running water. In Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's garden at Gunnersbury, in which the lake is almost covered with rare Water-lilies in summer-time, various grades are made for them, the deepest water for the robust growers, which would be from 18in. to 2ft. to the top of the crowns; the smallest kinds have about 8in. of water over them, and the medium growers from 1ft. to 15in. The way to plant is to put each stool into a basket, such an one as the *Nymphaeas* were packed in for conveyance to their destination. It is not wise to merely drop the roots into the water without some protection of this kind. Use for soil to fill the basket a mixture of fibrous loam and well-decayed leaf-mould, mixed with some sharp silver sand. A little rotten cow manure is a useful addition. The stools should be covered, and the baskets sunk gently to the bottom, varying the depths according to the variety. If the lake be very small, such robust kinds as the *Marliacea* hybrids mentioned are scarcely suitable, as they are extremely strong in growth. April is the planting time for the *Nymphaea*.

## SNOWDROPS IN A DELL.

Our illustration shows a delightful way of planting the Snowdrop, a modest flower by itself, but planted thickly in meadowland hiding the grass almost with its snowy sheets of bloom, as dense as a sea of Bluebells in the English woodland. By shady walks and streams, in clearings in copse, and in such dells as represented in our illustration, the Snowdrop increases fast. The ordinary kind is as charming as any, and *Elwesi*, a form of it, is a good Snowdrop, its large white flowers supported on tall strong stems. A host of Snowdrops may be had, but the old proved kinds seldom fail.

## THE BROOMS—SHRUBS FOR POOR SANDY SOILS.

Hungry dry banks, usually as bare as a table and as interesting, are not necessary in gardens, but one is told that "nothing will grow there." This is a mistake, for we have a beautiful shrubby group that is happy in this position, and when in flower amongst the most effective features in the garden. We all know the common Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), which brightens our waste places in late spring and early summer with its slender stems of brilliant yellow flowers, and varying in height according to the position and soil it occupies. We like to see this mixed with the hybrid called *Andreanus*, or a seedling, some say, from the native kind. In this the side wings of the flower are rich velvety brown, a strong and pleasing association of decided colours. This differs considerably in depth of colour, some forms being much paler than others. When established, it is wise to leave the Brooms alone. Few shrubs resent disturbance more than this race, so much so that in nurseries it is necessary to shift them every year until they are planted in their permanent quarters, as the roots go down deeply; otherwise the shrubs would scarcely succeed on dry banks and in poor sandy soils. Seed ripens freely and is produced in large quantities. It



F. Mason Good.

SNOWDROPS IN A DELL.

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germinates readily when sown out of doors, if a sheltered spot is selected for the purpose. Cuttings strike with moderate freedom in a frame.

## OTHER BEAUTIFUL BROOMS.

A group of the Spanish Broom (*C. albus*) in full bloom is always a pleasant picture. This grows from 6ft. to 10ft. in height, the slender stems wreathed in blossom as white as snow, and the growth is vigorous. It succeeds in very poor spots, where scarcely anything else is happy. *C. praecox* is very charming whilst its wonderful profusion of sulphur-coloured flowers remain in beauty, but, unfortunately, they are quickly over. It is worth planting, however, in a bold group simply for this delightful revelation of soft colour in spring, every



shoot hidden beneath the sulphury sea, and the plant grows quickly. We like a mass of this on the outskirts of the lawn, its shoots kissing the turf. *C. purpureus* is dwarf, not more, usually, than 2ft. high, and the shoots are long and arch gracefully. Its flowers are purple, and those of the variety *albus* are white. A shrub that is comparatively rare in gardens, though why we hardly know, is *C. nigricans*, which carries on the Brooms until the summer. This blossoms for many weeks, its erect racemes of yellow flowers making a welcome display when few other shrubs are in beauty. It grows between 3ft. and 4ft. in height, and should be obtained on its own roots. Grafting it on the *Laburnum*, as is frequently practised, is a mistake. Many failures in gardens may be attributed not to culture, soil, position, or constitution, but merely to the fact that the shrubs are grafted on some strong stock, which in time usurps the place of the shrub we wish for, or gets blown out by a high wind. There is no reason whatever why flowering shrubs should not be raised either by cuttings, seed, or layering, and thus obtained upon their own roots.

#### DAPHNE INDICA—THE INDIAN DAPHNE.

No indoor flower is sweeter in perfume than this *Daphne*, which, unlike the *Mezereon* already described, is not hardy, except in very favourable places in the extreme south of England and Ireland. It is a shrub of neat growth, with deep green leaves, and has terminal clusters of flowers, bright pink in the species, of a richer shade in the variety *rubra*, and there is a white form. Unfortunately, this *Daphne* is not easy to manage. The soil must be composed of peat and loam, mixed with a fair proportion of sand; and select in the greenhouse or intermediate house a fairly shaded position for it. Firm potting, very careful watering, and timely attention at all times, are essential.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.—We are always pleased to assist our readers in matters concerning the garden, and to receive notes and photographs for our "Correspondence" columns.

## HAWKING IN BOSNIA.

COUNTRY LIFE having recently contained several papers on hawking in the British Isles, I think it may not be uninteresting to compare the methods of another land with these. As in England, so in Bosnia falconry has continued to be practised from very ancient times to the present day continuously. The history of Bosnia is recorded in its folk-songs alone, and in them we find such passages as these:

"When the lords rode out to the chase,  
Each bore his hawk on his wrist,  
But Mustaj Bey held his hand to his heart.  
His true friends anxious ask:  
'Say, Mustaj Bey, what ails thee?  
Why hast thou brought no hawk,  
But hold'st thy hand to thy heart?'"

Again, a wife asks her sick husband

"If thou should'st die, Ibrahim Cehaja,  
For what would'st thou most grieve?  
Would'st grieve for thy old mother,  
Or for thy castles proud,  
Or for thy many villages,  
Or for thy colts, unbridled yet,  
Or for thy long-eared beagles,  
Or most for thy grey falcons,  
Or, perhaps—for thy true wife?"

The principal centre of hawking in Bosnia is Prjedor, perhaps because many of these birds build in the cliffs above the town; and the Beys of the Krajna district have the young birds taken from the nests. Somewhat curiously, by the way, the place has been selected for a Government poultry farm. One would think that one of two conflicting interests must suffer. In addition to the



WAITING FOR THE PARTRIDGES TO RISE.

inhabitants of this district, the noble Turkish families of Uzeirbegovic of Maglaj, and of Sirbegovic and Smajlbegovic of Tesanj, maintain the traditional sport of their ancestors. Their hawks, however, are mostly netted, the bait used to draw the young hawks to stoop into the net being a live jackdaw. As with us, the hen birds are preferred to the males.

The Turks of Prjedor distinguish three classes of hawks: the best, which can be trained to all flights; the less good, only suitable for the easy flight at quail; and lastly, the "wild hawks," which cannot be trained at all. The true falconer knows exactly from what nests each kind of hawk is to be expected. For instance, in the wood of Ozren there are a score of nests, occupied year after year, but the best kind of hawks come from three of them only.

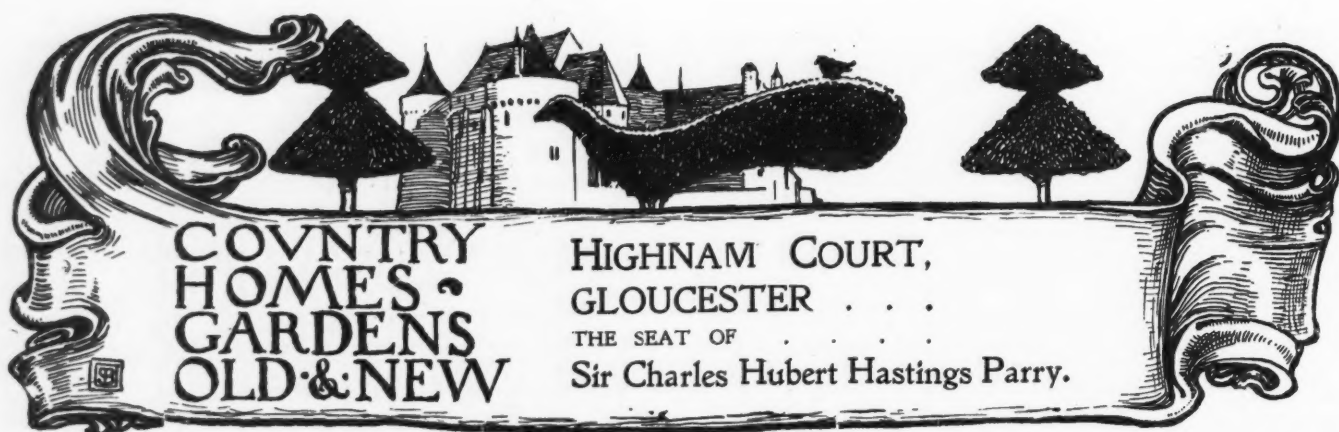
Quail-hawking is the commonest sport, then partridge-hawking; and also, strange to say, snipe-hawking. The birds are found with a pointer, and when a covey is flushed, the sportsman is WAITING FOR THE PARTRIDGES TO RISE, so that the flight must be to our ideas short and uninteresting. Quail, however, could hardly be expected to give much of a flight under any conditions.

BOSNIAN HAWKS are equipped with hoods and jesses like ours, and the hawking glove is also similarly used.

G. H.



BOSNIAN HAWKS.



**H**IGHNAM COURT, which lies about two miles west of the city of Gloucester, is both a very beautiful and a very interesting place. Its beauties arise in part from the attractive character of the charming country in which it lies, in the old Forest of Dean, and from the extensive views it commands, and in part from the particularly delightful features of the gardens which we illustrate and propose to describe. The interests of Highnam Court are both architectural and historical. The estate belonged to the Abbey of Gloucester, but, about the year 1600, it passed by marriage to Sir William Cooke. The house was erected for Colonel Cooke during the interregnum by Carter, who was a pupil of Inigo Jones and surveyor of the works to Cromwell. Colonel Cooke, though intimate in the Protector's counsels, was reconciled at the Restoration, restored to favour, and made sheriff of the county. The old mansion, like many others in the country, became uninhabitable during the Civil War, through its misfortune in being held successively by both parties.

Gloucester played a remarkable part in the struggle, and Highnam witnessed stirring events during the siege. About it the banners of King and Parliament waved to and fro. The fortunes of the Roundheads were at their lowest ebb. Waller had been crumpled up on Roundway Down by the Cornishmen, Rupert had met Hampden on Chalgrove Field, and the West was all but won for the Royalist cause. Gloucester alone, of important places, held out for the Parliament, and was firm during a memorable siege, bravely defended by Colonel Massey with obstinate courage, while Essex, with 12,000 men, hastened to the rescue. The Royalists suffered a severe reverse during the siege at the hands of Colonel Massey, who, with inferior forces, in a

heavy fight on the Highnam side, where the Royalists had their quarters, slew about 500 of the King's Welsh troops, and took 150 more prisoners into the city. The siege of Gloucester was, in fact, the turning-point in the fortunes of the war.

Early in the eighteenth century, Highnam passed, by the marriage of a co-heiress, to the family of Guise, and the estate was purchased in 1839 by the family of the present proprietor. To the late Mr. Thomas Gambier Parry both it and the neighbourhood owe a great deal. His fine taste and presiding hand directed everything aright. The house is rich in specimens of early ivory carving, and sculpture, bronzes, enamels, early Italian paintings, and other works of art, and the garden, which had had many charms before, grew, through his loving care of it, into the green home of well-ordered beauty, in which light and shade and finely-contrasted colours create a very remarkable charm. It was through the munificence of Mr. Parry, also, that the splendid Decorated church, which stands near the mansion, was founded

and built. He was an artist of equal skill and knowledge, and he devoted incessant care to the beautifying of the sacred edifice, and the Scripture subjects on the chancel walls and in the baptistery, as well as the spirit frescoes of the nave, and the "Doom" over the chancel arch, were painted by his own hand.

Our illustrations reveal the special character of the gardens of Highnam, with their wonderful growth of conifers, and show how well the house stands amid its surroundings, its front touched here and there with green, the growths of climbing plants and flowers in the terrace border, with its relieving standard roses, and the dark cedar of Lebanon filling the picture on the left. The advantage of situation is here very manifest, for the position is very

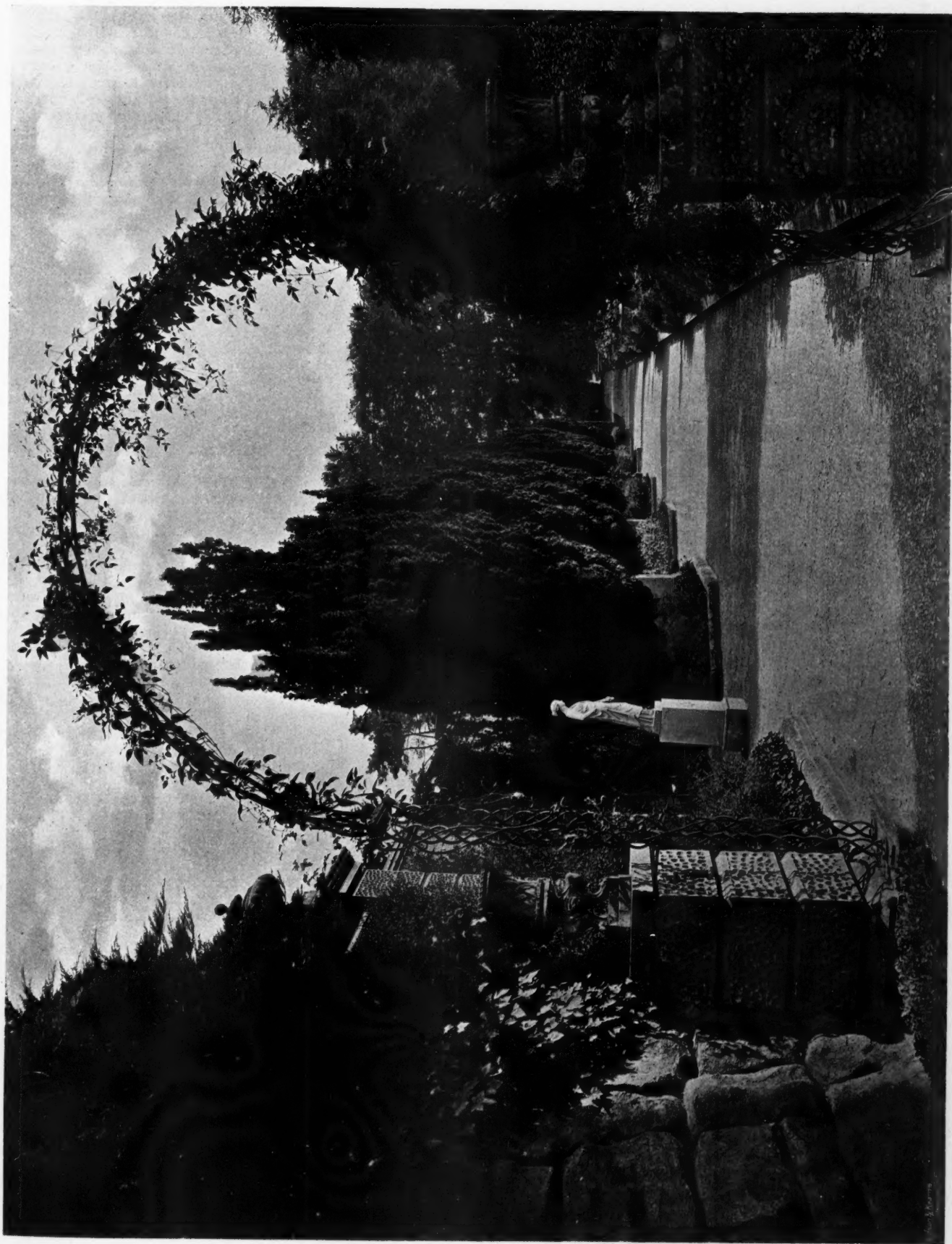


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THE SPRING.

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GARDENS OLD AND NEW.—HIGHNAM COURT: THE SOUTH WALK.

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THE WATER GARDEN.

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good, and the surrounding country full of varied beauty—a forest land, moreover, with many hoary survivors of the greenwood day. There are thus at Highnam Court our English familiar trees in happy unison with many gathered from other climes. The late Mr. Parry had a great love for coniferous trees, and the pinetum, at the distance of about a mile from the house, and covering a considerable area of land, contains one of the most interesting collections of these trees in the country. Through the walled garden we see a beautiful avenue of Irish yews, which is also amongst the finest in the land. The garden might, indeed, be called a garden of conifers, though it is to be observed that these are most happily contrasted with deciduous trees, and with flowers, as in the trim beds in the south walk leading from the winter garden, each thus relieving and enforcing the particular beauty of the other. What is to be observed, moreover, of Highnam Court, is that the conifers prosper, and manifest all their beauty, owing to the judicious care with which the kinds have been planted in the positions best suited for them. To this result, skill, good soil, and favourable situation have equally conduced.

It is not easy to fix upon any one place as the most beautiful in these attractive pleasure grounds, though everyone must like that quiet, sequestered, and sunny spot known as the rock-work or winter garden, which is shown in one of the illustrations, as is also the spring leading to that pleasant retreat. Here the formal garden paths bring the visitor to a most lovely range of rock-work, with abundant vegetation and remarkable ornamental trees. The scene has a very delightful, natural character, and the diversity of plant life in the place is really wonderful. Ferns and rock plants in luxuriant masses clothe the stone, while lofty and well-proportioned conifers of noble kinds rise like sentinels above. There are glorious groups of rhododendrons in one place, yews and various conifers in another, remarkable depths of colour, with happy contrast, being relieved by the tints of lighter foliage. Birch, Irish yew, and other trees give charming effects, the evergreen shrubs making bold groups, with many graceful bamboos adding their special attraction. The cool margin of the merry stream, moreover, provides hospitable places for the flourishing bog plants and water-loving flowers that have been planted by its side.

To make a catalogue of the numerous varieties of trees that grow at Highnam would be neither useful nor interesting. Yet, to illustrate the point that success will attend judicious planting, some special kinds may be alluded to. Here, for example, is the *Eucalyptus globulus* prospering as it should, though it is by no means a tree sufficiently robust even for mild situations, and one that can rarely be depended upon in this country for permanent effect. Then Highnam has a noble avenue of lofty *araucarias*, whose lower branches kiss the ground, while in most situations in England these die away in the course of a few years, with an effect almost deplorable. The lesson is, of course, obvious. The tender or doubtful kinds, like the *eucalyptus* referred to, and the *araucaria* and *Wellingtonia*, must be planted judiciously in suitable soil and favourable situations, and those who do not possess the right conditions must depend more on the hardier trees, such as the *Corsican pine*, which, as we may say again, is beautiful in colour, rapid in growth, and excellent for general planting. The Highnam pinetum contains, of course, a wonderful variety of such trees, and among them, not to be forgotten here, Parry's pine, so named after the late Mr. Parry, though now its scientific cognomen of *Pinus Parryana* has been changed to that of *Pinus Cembroides*. The collection of specimen conifers has had an attraction for many minds, and pinetums exist on not a few country estates. There is, for example, one of much interest at Streatham Castle, the seat of the Earl of



Strathmore, on the Durham side of the Tees.

But pines, firs, and their many relatives and congeners, however attractive their height, proportions, and subtle colouring, or however grateful their scented shade, would be monotonous without the richer greens, grander contours, and more luxuriant foliage of our deciduous trees. Here, as has been said, Highnam is by no means at fault. On the north side of the house especially, and in the park, are splendid timber trees, including fine oaks, elms, and beeches, which pass from the bare tracery of the winter, through their fresh vesture of early green, to the full splendour of umbrageous June, and change to glowing hues in autumn—the beech growing radiant indeed—contrasting thus most happily with their sisters of sober tint and less decided change.

If flowers have been little mentioned in this account of Highnam, it is not

that they are few, but because the growth of trees, and more particularly of conifers, is the dominant note of the place. The rich floral beauties of the garden are enforced by the contrasts afforded by the growth of shrubs and trees. To group and happily proportion the varied effects in a garden is the work of a master, and the Gloucester house we illustrate has been fortunate. How to mass colour and relieve shade, to seize the advantages of position, to enforce what is beautiful and eliminate the harsh or ungraceful, to create wholly acceptable garden pictures—this is the highest art of the garden lover; and certainly such places as the gardens of Highnam Court are fruitful in examples and full of suggestion.

Our pictures, however, tell the tale better than words. They reveal a garden full of interest, and with a picturesqueness and character of its own. Of course, much more might have been described, but space is



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THE YEW AVENUE.

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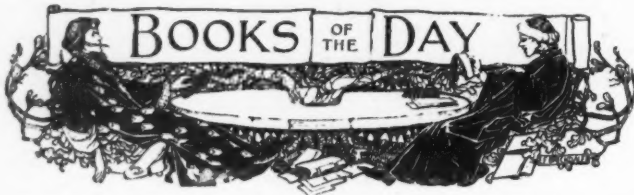


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A GLIMPSE OF THE GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

almost exhausted, and, in conclusion, it may suffice to mention that, in the various houses, and the detached conservatory, the evidence of garden love, and of knowledge not less, is conspicuous. Neither are the more domestic parts of the garden, devoted to fruit and kitchen growths, less satisfactory in their way. Highnam, in short, is a particularly good example of what a large country garden ought to be.



I SHALL draw attention to-day chiefly to two novels of widely different character, and yet both of much merit. The author of "Dodo" and "The Babe, B.A.," is discovered revelling again in the hurricane period of the War of Greek Independence, with a veritable tempest for a heroine. Mr. E. F. Benson's "The Capsina" (Methuen) is a sister volume to "The Vintage." It is an historical story, with some allowable latitude, and Kanaris, Miaulis, and other characters of the time march through the pages. It would be idle to say that the author's perverted zeal leaves the reader unmoved. There is something extraordinarily fascinating about Sophia Capsas of Hydra, the Capsina, arising, perhaps, in part from her utter dissimilarity from other heroines. The clan etiquette which betroths her to her cousin Christos is altogether repugnant to her soul, for she is born to heroic deeds, and is a shipwright filled with the fascination of the sea, and, in due time, when the brand of the burning has sped its message of freedom along the coast, is a woman captain in her ship the *Sophia*, with Kanaris as her sailing master. There comes into her life Mitsos Codones, the lad straight and strong, marching up from his ship with the burden of two upon his shoulders, his shirt open at the neck showing a chest brown with wind and sun, and from his lips pouring forth the glad "Song of the Vine-diggers." It is a fine picture. "Someone from the sun and the sea, and you shall be his, and the ship shall be his, and I shall be his!" So, while Kanaris is captain of the *Sophia*, Mitsos sails with the *Capsina* in the *Revenge*. It was the time when the Turks were striking the Greeks with the two-edged sword of cruelty, and the *Capsina* and Kanaris find the hideous evidence of their fiendish work in the village of her own mother, whereupon her soul is blinded with hate and the lust of vengeance, and her heart swells with horror unspeakable. So with the Turks in her grasp, wounded men and women escaping, she revels in equal cruelty. Mitsos shrinks from her hardness. "Do not judge me," she cries, "for, indeed, I am not myself. When this is over, if God wills, I shall be myself again. O lad! have you water or milk in your veins? Do you forget what we saw yesterday?" But the young man has his vision turned elsewhere, to his own Suleima and their child, and, on discovering this, terrible is the struggle in the fiery heart of the *Capsina*. Pacing the shore in the agony of her soul, wind and chill are but a minor part in the wild and bitter symphony of her thoughts. Since the day when he came up from his ship in the sunset she had felt that they two were to complete a life together. Their long fights and comradeship in the storms of the *Ægean* had put the seal on her certainty. Was it impossible? "Could God be so unkind? She who spent her days and risked her all—and oh, how willingly!—fighting against

His enemies, was this her wage?" In the stress and storm of this turbulent spirit Mr. Benson triumphs. She is a very fine creation, moulded of strong stuff indeed. How the reaction takes place in her, what prodigies of vengeance she accomplishes, how burns the fury of her soul, and what is her dramatic end, his readers will like to discover. This is the chief interest of the book. Mitsos, though natural enough, is less convincing. Wicked old Nikola and his idyll add a little amusement to a story that is generally tragic and stern enough. But, though tragic and stern, the atmosphere is decidedly bracing, and the successive scenes and historical illustrations are conveyed with unmistakable power.

The name of Mrs. Bertram Tanqueray is unknown to me, and I think she is a new writer of fiction—clearly, from many indications in her "Hoya Corney" (Digby, Long), an inexperienced. Yet she has certainly made a readable story of popular sort with an excellent plot, very dramatic character, and many striking situations. The dramatic composition of the book is, indeed, its most interesting feature, and the pity is that literary power has not been linked with the other essential. The scene is in the Fenland country, which is well described, and opens in rustic circumstances. A poor woman gives birth to a boy, and dies, leaving him to a lesotted father, who develops into a drivelling wretch. So far all is unpropitious for the future. But there comes by a woman, describing herself as Hagar Jetsam, in whose veins courses the passionate blood of the South, and in whose heart is an aching void, to be filled with love for the boy Hoya, whom she nurtures towards manhood. There is an artistic vein in the lad's temperament, and the greater people of the neighbourhood take an interest in him, among them the daughter of the Earl of Reedholme. Among the Earl's friends is a Cræsus by the name of Dominic Wisconsin, by whose past history hangs the interest of the story. For Hagar is no other than his discarded wife, the mother of his dead boy. Thus the happiness of the existing Mrs. Wisconsin and her family rests in the hollow of her hand. But Hagar, with all the fervour of her Southern imagination and the passionate strength of her love for the boy, plots for him, reveals herself to her husband, and pronounces him to be their son. The mad scheme is rooted in her half-frenzied brain. She loves the boy as her own—has come almost to regard him as her own—and resolves to make him an artist and a gentleman. Meanwhile the spark of natural fury breaks out in his besotted father. He feels that his dead wife is robbed of her child, and he resolves to wreak vengeance upon the wrong-doer. Hoya protects her from his hand, and they escape, and she tells him that he is, in fact, Dominic Wisconsin's son. It is but a half-conviction, however, for deep down in his heart is the doubt of Hagar's oft-repeated assertion that he was but a change-ling. Then he is drawn into the art world as a student, meets and knows the Earl's fair daughter, and becomes the friend of Joan Wisconsin, a well-conceived personality, and a girl of strength and character, who is an art-student like himself. The young man recognises Joan as his sister, but she, knowing nothing of the dark story, conceives passionate love for him. Meanwhile his own affection is placed high upon the person of the Earl's lovely daughter. If he is Wisconsin's son, and now a famous artist, he is fit match for her; if the son of the Fenland peasant, then might he wed with Joan. There is a fine scene in which Hagar dying, frenzied to dance her old dance to the notes of the rude organ in Hatton Garden outside, craves for the coming of the youth she has cherished. She half confesses her fraud, urges him to marry Joan so that he may, indeed, be Wisconsin's son, and ends her stormy course. I have suggested the dramatic points upon which the interest of the story turns, and am glad to say that the strange, passionate, half-frenzied character of Hagar is well conceived and well executed. Some others are more shadowy, but, after all, the characters are generally men and women of flesh and blood, and the interest does not flag.



IN this paper I propose to treat, at less length than I have written before, of a number of European countries which are more or less worthy of the attention of sportsmen, and, to begin with, our nearest neighbour,

#### FRANCE.

This country, having a fair game list (deer, roe, boar, bear, wolves, chamois, and all English game except the red grouse), might be expected to be worthy of the gunner's attention; but as a matter of fact, excluding the chance of invitations to private shoots, the only places that can at all be recommended are the Pyrenees, and possibly Corsica. I say "possibly Corsica," because I am a little in doubt as to whether it is still worth anybody's while to go there for big game. The snipe shooting is good, but I fancy moufflon are scarce and hard to get. There are, probably, more boar than wild sheep in the island now; still I believe it is a pleasant winter resort, and for a man not very keen might provide an excuse to take a rifle. (N.B.—Travelling with loaded cartridges in France is forbidden.) The game list of the Pyrenees is made up by bear, ibex (*C. Hispanica*), and

chamois, there called izzard. The two former are rarely, if ever, seen on the French slope, but some fun might be expected with the goat-antelopes. Chamois also occur in the French Alps, but are being sadly shot down. Wolves are not uncommon in Central France, but nobody in their senses would go so far to look for such a wandering brute.

#### SWITZERLAND.

Chamois in this country are increasing in numbers, in fact all game is, and shooting is free to licence-holders. The difficulty is, however, to get a licence, or rather licences, for there are two kinds, one for chamois, deer, marmot, and ibex (which I believe to be extinct in the country), and the other for small game, as the number issued for each canton is limited. Moreover, there are sometimes residential conditions; e.g., in the Grisons you must have been three months in the canton before you apply for a licence. However, as many Englishmen go to this country every year, and some of them would like to shoot a chamois, I will give them a "tip." Westward from the St. Gothard railway, south of the great tunnel,



and reaching to the Italian frontier, lies a district practically unvisited by Englishmen. It is a country unopened up by rail or coach, and there are no hills, but the sportsman prepared to rough it at a *locanda* or a farm-house will find it not without its charm.

Crossing the frontier brings us to the first of the Latin countries,

#### ITALY.

This country has but a poor name among sportsmen, and this deservedly so, but long experience has taught me that sport sometimes comes when least looked for. Who would expect to hear of bears in Italy? Yet in 1894 two were killed quite near my temporary residence on the Lake of Como. From hence, eastward, along the Swiss frontier, a few chamois may be got. In the rest of Continental Italy there is practically no game except in royal or private preserves. Sardinia, however, is an excellent shooting country, in spite of its ugly name for brigandage. Moufflon, red and fallow deer, and boar are fairly numerous, and the wildfowling is also good.

#### SPAIN.

This is certainly the best shooting country in Southern Europe. Mr. Abel Chapman tells us much about it, but does not tell us how to get it. While I write, however, a series of articles dealing with these points is appearing in a contemporary; but they speak only of Northern Spain, so I will break fresh ground, and write of the western districts. These, like the northern, have the great advantage that one can go there direct from England, taking all one's impedimenta.

My advice then to Englishmen wishful to try their luck in Spain would be to take ship to Vigo. The Hall's Line of steamers from Liverpool call there. Certain papers are required, particulars of which can be obtained at the Spanish Consulate-General. The shooting licence is 25 pesetas, which should be £1, but at the present value of Spanish money is much less. From Vigo the gunner should make his way to Orense by rail. Near this station is an excellent inn, called the Fonda de Roma, and this is a capital headquarters, as a coach runs thence to Santiago. Orense is also an excellent fishing centre.

Following the line somewhat further we come to Ponferrada. Here, again, there is a comfortable inn, the Fonda del Azufre. This is an inland watering-place, with baths, etc., so that the accommodation is unusually good for a Spanish country place, and can be recommended to sportsmen when ladies accompany the party. The district all round is very lovely; the hills are stocked with game, and the valleys teem with trout. Both the places I have spoken of above can be recommended to those who want to make a fairly short and inexpensive trip. To those with more time and perhaps more money to spend (though really the extra cost is little more than that of the additional week's living), and who are especially desirous of getting big game, I recommend a ride on to Brañuelas, in the Mountains of Leon. The commonest big game in these hills are roe deer, boar, and wolves, but there are also red deer and bear. There is an inn at Brañuelas; but a more convenient shooting centre is the pueblo at Boca del Inferno, right up in the mountains.

For those who are willing to take a good deal of trouble, and travel with a pack-train, albeit a small one, and tents, another good place to take train to is Zamora, from which the Sierra de Culebras can be conveniently reached. Another good beat is the Sierra de Guadarrama, attainable from Segovia. Few sportsmen who have made their way so far will resist the temptation to try for a Spanish ture, or ibex, in the Sierra de Gredos. These animals have never yet been successfully stalked by any Englishmen, though they have often been killed in drives.

It must be remembered that shooting in Spain is not free, though as a rule, and especially away from towns, permission is never refused. Care must be taken to keep away from the nets erected in places to catch quails, starlings, etc., or bad blood may be raised. The season commences on September 1st, and the sportsman should be on his selected ground by that date. As it is often very hot, suitable dress should be worn. I recommend a suit of "Fobro" cloth, and a Heath's "Sportsman" cap of light material. As nearly all Spanish shooting is done by driving, a shot-and-ball gun is the best weapon. Of course, if the shooter intends to lay himself out for big game, a "Snaffle" rifle is the one I recommend, and it will account for deer, boar, or bear at ranges where a gun would be useless.

One last word, and that of warning. As is well known, the English Government, much to the regret of some of us who know and love Spain, took an active part against that country during the late unfortunate war. This may not be forgotten yet, and perhaps it would be well for English sportsmen to take the opinion of the Consulate-General at Madrid as to the advisability of visiting the country in 1899. The feeling is the more to be regretted, as before the war no people were more popular in Spain than the English; nor was the old Peninsular Alliance by any means forgotten.

SNAFFLE.

## OUR SIEGE OF JOTAPATA; Or, The True Uses of History.

By C. J. CORNISH.

CHARLES LAMB, in his "Detached Thoughts on Books and Reading," sets out a list of "books which are no books." Among these he places Court calendars, pocket-books, dictionaries, encyclopædias; draught-boards, bound and lettered on the back, all works of reference and useful knowledge, the "Decline and Fall" of Gibbon, and the histories of Marcus Flavius Josephus.

When we were boys we had no such imperfect sympathies. On the contrary, we had a very high opinion of the works of Josephus, especially of the "Wars of the Jews," contained in a bulky illustrated volume. The pictures of battles had arrested our attention, and we had nothing but praise for the diagrams showing the construction of engines of war. But what particularly pleased us was a series of views illustrating the siege of Jotapata, and the exploits of Josephus himself in defending that heroic city. These showed battering-rams in action, towers toppling, darts flying, and enormous catapults, the very name of which was dear to us, hurling stones over the ramparts of the town. In the evenings, stretched on the hearthrug which we shared on equitable terms with two Irish setters, until the hour when dogs and boys were sent to bed, enjoying the sleepy warmth, and with Josephus propped against a footstool, we read aloud by the light of the log-fire, and one silver candlestick on the floor, the extremely prosy translation of the story of that exciting siege.

It was Josephus's account of the battering-ram that first suggested to us that we might perhaps have a siege of Jotapata all to ourselves. The implement did not seem beyond our powers of construction, while the results of its use, as shown in the engravings of the siege, made the frankest appeal to our tastes. The beam, the trestles, and the slings—all these things we thought we could manage; and though the carved ram's head of metal was clearly beyond us, the youngest brother knew of the lead spout of a water-pipe (which looked loose), and which, if forced on to the end of our beam, we thought would "do."

"And just listen what it did," said Jim, the second eldest. "This ram batters the walls with a mighty noise; and there is no tower so strong, or walls so broad, that can resist any more than its first batterings, but all are forced to yield to it at last."

"I don't think it would shake the church tower down," I observed; "but we might batter the coach-house—it's only brick, and the roof will make a good place to defend."

"Yes, and we can let down sacks of chaff, like Josephus did, to stop the ram. There's lots of chaff and sacks too, and we can easily get rope."

"We can use the linen-lines," I added.

"And if we can get anyone to be Romans, they can make a 'tortoise' when the walls are battered down, one Saturday afternoon, and we can drop weights on them from above," chimed in Jim.

"They dropped logs of wood and stones on them," I replied, again consulting the Josephus, which we already looked upon as a text-book for the siege.

"Stones of the weight of a talent," quoted the youngest brother, dreamily.

"How much was a talent?" enquired Jim.

"Not very big," said the youngest brother; "you could wrap one up in a napkin."

"There are some stones down by the river which you couldn't wrap up in a towel," said Jim. "We might bring them up in a wheelbarrow, and get them on to the roof, and then drop them on the tortoise. It won't hurt, because they will have hurdles—at least, not much. We should let them roll slowly"—here he became almost dramatic in his utterance—"roll sl-o-owly down the slope of the roof, from just behind the ridge, where we should be sheltered from the arrows and things, and they would be a surprise."

"Wouldn't they rather break the slates?" I demurred, for though quite ready to knock in the wall, we had an idea that the bricks would only need resetting, and promised ourselves a fund of amusement from that.

"We must have stones," said the youngest brother, "to break off the head of the battering-ram. Here it is:

"Eleazar took up a stone of a vast bigness and threw it down from the wall upon the ram, and this with so great a force that it broke off the head of the engine. He also leaped down and took up the head of the ram from the midst of them without any concern, and carried it to the top of the wall, and all this while he stood a fit mark to be pelted by all his enemies."

"Of course we'll have the stones," said Jim. "They can

pelt us with potatoes. There are a lot of bad ones in a box; I know where they are."

"We might melt some lead," said the youngest brother. "They generally poured melted lead on people in sieges. There is a lot of lead on the coach-house roof. All along the edge it's lead. I got some of the little bits folded over the tops of the nails the other day for ballast for my boat."

"At the siege of Jotapata it wasn't lead," remarked Jim, sententiously; "it wasn't invented then; it was boiling oil. Just listen how the Romans caught it:

"It was a s-a-g-a-c—sagacious invention. They soon got it ready, being many that brought it, and what they brought being a great quantity also, and poured it on all sides upon the Romans, and threw down upon them their vessels as they were still hissing from the fire. This so burnt the Romans that it dispersed that united band, who tumbled down from the wall with horrid pains, for the oil did easily run down the whole body from head to foot, under their entire armour, and fed upon their flesh like flame itself, its fat and unctuous nature rendering it soon heated and slowly cooled."

"Well, we can't have any oil, it's too dear," I remarked; "but we can take up a few pails of water. It'll look all right, and it's cold out of the well."

Next morning we awoke eager to begin, and set to work to collect the engines for the siege. We began with THE BATTERING-RAM, and in a surprisingly short time had made one which would have been commended by Vespasian himself. In the stable were three heavy spars of wood, intended to be put across the

back of the stalls, through staples, and so to convert a stall into a loose box when required. The wood was oak, old and solid, and admirably suited to form the beam of a battering-ram. To hold this in our arms, as the Romans did in some of the pictures, was not only tiring, but *infra dig.*, considering the model we had before us. So we decided to "sling" one, as Vespasian's best battering-ram was slung, and to protect it, if necessary, with hurdles, that being a device noted by Josephus. Two large portable linen-horses, used in the laundry, made an almost perfect pair of trestles from which to sling the ram. This we did by getting some lengths of webbing—whence

procured I cannot now remember, but I think from the bottom of an old bed—and fastening the ram at two points, so that it swung freely. We next reconnoitred the coach-house, and, having selected a weakish-looking bit of wall, near the big doors, we "approached the ram" tentatively, and smote the bricks with that admirable engine. The shocks which it gave, when only two of us were working it, did certainly shake the building, and promised the happiest results.

WE READ JOSEPHUS BY THE FIRE that night, until we were sent to bed, and could hardly sleep for thinking of the battering-ram. Before breakfast we again reconnoitred the coach-house, and selected the part of the wall on which to begin. We were not free till the afternoon, when without further delay we began the first day of the siege.

"If you can only get out a single brick the whole wall will follow." That's what it says," said Jim, and running up the ram, we slammed solidly at the wall. We had relays, two at a time, while the third ate an apple, and pounded away for at least an hour before perceiving any of the gratifying results which the Jewish historian had led us to expect. Then the first brick began to go. Red powder came out of it, then it cracked, then it crumbled, and disappeared. Jim was right. When the first brick went the others *did* follow.

For the next half-hour we realised that labour was indeed its own reward. Having put our hand to the plough, so to say, we did not draw back. Brick after brick was loosened, hit on the weak end with the battering-ram and knocked inside the coach-house, until there was a handsome pile of them, with

plenty of mortar and dust, visible inside when in the intervals of battering we poked our heads in at the breach to see the results.

"It's a good breach," said Jim, "and we can make it bigger to-morrow. Now we must set about raising a wall behind it, and stretch raw bullock-skins on stakes to keep off the slings and arrows. Mr. Amos" (the butcher) "generally has a lot of skins, and as we get our meat there I expect he'd lend us some. But they are rather beastly; we might try blankets instead."

"Yes," said the youngest brother, "and soak them with water; Josephus did."

"He didn't," I replied, with the frank dissent peculiar to our time of life.

"He did," replied the younger brother, and running into the house, he came out with our text-book open at the place: "Josephus gave command that they should wet a great many of their clothes and hang them out about the battlements, till the entire walls were of a sudden all wet with the running down of the water. At this sight the Romans were discouraged when they saw them able to throw away in sport so much water when they supposed they had not enough to drink themselves."

"We could easily do that," said Jim, "but I don't think it would be much good. We had much better get a bucket or two upon the roof, and then ask some fellows to come and play on Saturday."

Being anxious to make the most of our new undertaking, we decided to do this, and ask a few friends to take the city. Then converting ourselves into the besieged, and with Josephus ever by our side, we did our best to follow and reproduce the ingenious

devices of the Jewish patriot. The coach-house had long been disused for its proper purpose, but was very large and airy. Moreover it contained some dozen huge packing-cases, in which furniture had anciently been brought to the house. These we confiscated for the purposes of national defence, and throwing open the coach-house doors, ranged a line of big packing-cases across the entrance. Over these were small boxes, with intervals, which made capital battlements; and behind the breach, to give a touch of realism, were old horse-rugs fastened to poles, *vice* bullock-skins, voted too beastly for use. Some platforms (a tip taken from Josephus) were made for discharging missiles from, and a vast store of these

were collected in boxes ready for use. Besides the potatoes, more than half of which we had generously left to the besiegers, we had a fine large box of half-rotten quinces, a lucky find we had made in a loft, which, being both hard and explosive, promised to do infinite credit to the disciples of Josephus. A few pails of water, faggots, and a sack or two of chaff we kept ready in the back stable, whence we knew of a means of exit on to the roof. Thence we hoped, if matters became desperate, to make a last effort to protect the breach, and to disperse the tortoise, if our friends had the hardihood to form one.

That evening we sent a general invitation to our acquaintance among the village boys for the following Saturday; but feeling that they needed the "steel head" to point the attacking spear, for two or three of them were rather soft, and apt to fail us when we were on the eve of some striking success, we penned notes to one or two staunch allies among our friends at a little distance, to invite them to the "gentle and joyous passage of arms" which we had designed for their entertainment.

"Dear John Barnadiston," we wrote, "On Saturday will you ride over after luncheon we have a Roman siege a batering-ram is part, we can have a tortus if you can get enough."

"To Master John Barnadiston,  
"Windwhistle Hall, Suffolk."

Visions of the next day's assault flitted through our dreams that night. There was little doubt that our friend, John Barnadiston, whose determined temper we knew well, would push matters to the utmost, and instil into his legionaries the



WE READ JOSEPHUS BY THE FIRE.



courage which animated his own bosom. Our only fear was that he might neglect the more artistic side, and fail to use the battering-ram as a preliminary, or omit to form a "tortus." In any case it was certain that the attackers would be frightfully galled by the missiles prepared within, while on our part, with a cunning learnt from our great Jewish strategist, we had prepared several lengths of garden-netting to hang above the battlements, and to intercept in great measure the projectiles with which we had supplied the legionaries. Several wicker hurdles were left to the use of the other party, and there was no knowing whether, if they made a fixture of these as a means of defence, we might not be able to burn them in a sortie, as the Jews burnt Vespasian's mantlets.

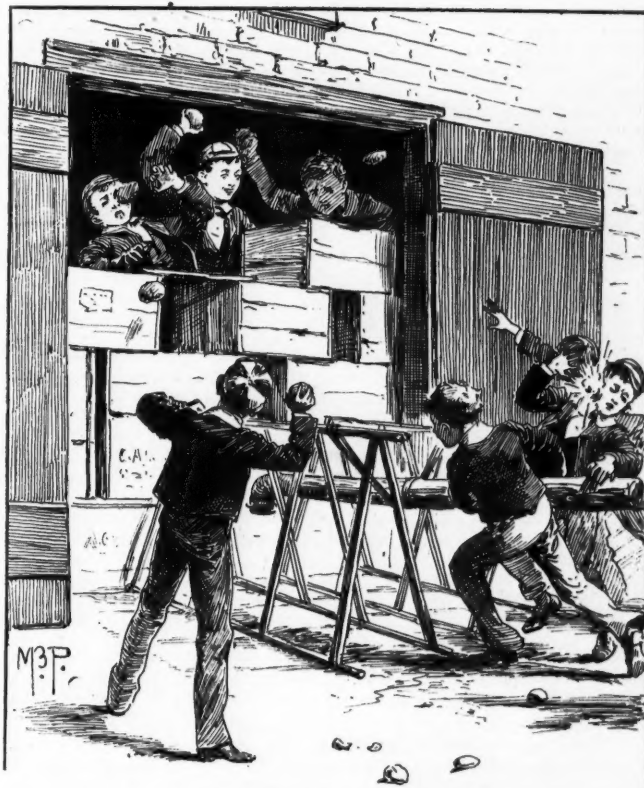
The invited guests showed themselves worthy of the best traditions of the Roman army, and though they did not enter into the spirit of the siege as completely as we could have wished, every allowance had to be made for their unacquaintance with the historic details which we had so carefully mastered. The battering-ram was worked under a frightfully destructive fire of quinces and potatoes from the fortress, and something so nearly approaching the desired formation of a tortoise was achieved that we were able to upset a large box from the ramparts on to the top of them with the most realistic results.

The garrison suffered severely. The youngest brother received a potato in his eye, which entirely closed that organ, and I, myself, standing up to meet an onslaught headed by John Barnardiston in person—his neck and Eton collar almost obliterated by a squashed quince—was dislodged and temporarily disabled by a blow in the stomach communicated by the cover of a packing-case dislodged by the battering-ram, which, having failed to enlarge the breach successfully, was brought up to smash in our barricade of boxes.

At this period, with the garrison reduced by wounds, and ammunition giving out, the assault was once more checked at the critical moment. A rumour spread among the assailants that the buckets of water held in reserve were being brought forward for action, and the garrison obtained a temporary respite as the enemy retired. Immediately after this the city fell, by one of those unforeseen accidents to which the greatest generals sometimes fall victims.

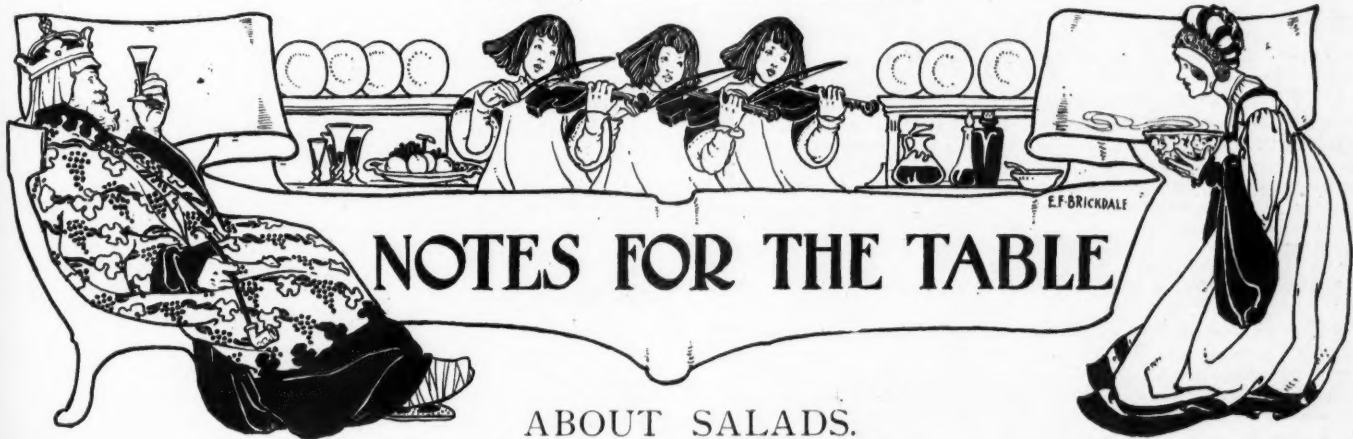
Treachery worked its downfall. The stable-door at the back had purposely been left unlocked, that in the last resort the garrison might retreat on to the roof.

The garden-boy, who was aware of this, held secret consultations with some of John Barnardiston's native auxiliaries, with whom he was connected by family ties, and they in turn communicated the secret to their leader. Setting part of his forces to skirmish in front, and to divert the attention of the garrison, he effected an entry with a picked band through the



THE BATTERING-RAM.

stable-door, and these pouring into the coach-house through the harness-room made further resistance impossible, and the garrison surrendered at discretion. The destruction of the defences and the damage done at the breach bore ample testimony to the protracted and desperate nature of the defence. When the rector left his Suffolk home for another and larger benefice in Berkshire, the bill for "dilapidations" and reconstruction in the coach-house was evidence alike of the effective character of the battering-ram, and of the zeal with which we had turned the precepts of Josephus into practice. He still remembers, and maintains that he never will forget, the results of the siege of Jotapata.



## NOTES FOR THE TABLE

### ABOUT SALADS.

WHEN we consider the variety of material—both raw and cooked—from which salads can be made, it is astonishing that lettuce, either used alone or with the conventional mixture of beetroot, mustard and cress, and watercress, still plays such an important part at a cold repast in the average English household.

I do not wish to say anything against this peculiarly British preparation, but variety should be aimed at by the ambitious house-mistress and her cook. Many cooks, although they excel in making an English salad, cannot prepare an ordinary plain French salad, which, in the estimation of many connoisseurs, is preferable to the most elaborate *salade cuite* for serving with roast fowl. The lettuce, or endive—the smooth kind known as Batavian endive is particularly suitable for a plain salad—unless recently cut, should be refreshed in very cold water for half-an-hour, and then shaken gently in a clean cloth until free from moisture. Then the leaves should be carefully torn into pieces of a convenient size, placed in the salad bowl, and a few drops of salad oil, of the best quality, sprinkled over them; they must then be lightly turned with a wooden spoon and fork,

and this process must be continued until every piece of lettuce, or endive, is coated with oil; but to do this thoroughly it is essential that the leaves be turned every time before more oil is dropped on to them. A small quantity of either red or white wine vinegar, and a few drops of tarragon—or some other herb—vinegar, should be shaken over the leaves in the same way as the oil, and when done, if the salad has been properly turned during the process of dressing it, the liquids will have adhered so well that there will be only a suspicion of the dressing at the bottom of the bowl. A dust of salt and freshly-ground black pepper is all that is necessary to complete the process, and the salad will then be ready to serve.

#### SALAD OF MIXED VEGETABLES.

A salad of mixed cooked vegetables can be made a very attractive dish. The greater the variety of vegetables used the better it will be. The carrots, turnips, cucumber, beetroot, potatoes, etc., should be cut into shapes with fancy cutters of different sizes, and the French beans, artichokes, celery or celeriac, and salsify into strips; and a liberal supply of green peas should be mixed with the other vegetables. The top of the salad should be garnished with golden and red aspic jelly, and sprays of cauliflower which have been sprinkled with chopped parsley, and leaves and other fancy shapes of cucumber (cooked) which

have been sprinkled with coralline pepper. For such a salad a creamy mayonnaise dressing is most suitable, and the following is a reliable recipe for it: Put the raw yolks of two new-laid eggs into a basin with a pinch of salt and pepper, and a saltspoonful of mustard; mix them well with a wooden spoon, and then whisk the eggs with a small whisk, or a patent egg-beater, and add salad oil, drop by drop (whisking the eggs all the time), until the sauce is of the consistency of butter; then add a teaspoonful of tarragon vinegar, and when this has been well mixed, half a teaspoonful of cucumber or chilli vinegar, and lastly a teaspoonful of white wine vinegar or lemon juice. For a *salade de légumes*, the mayonnaise may with advantage be made with thick cream in place of the oil, or, if preferred, it may be merely finished with cream, two tablespoonfuls of which would be sufficient for the given quantity of sauce.

#### POTATO SALAD.

To make this salad really satisfactorily, new potatoes should be used, as ordinary floury potatoes are quite unsuitable for the purpose. Boil, or, better still, steam the potatoes until they are thoroughly cooked. Let them get cold, cut them into neat slices, and dress them with oil and white wine vinegar. Rub a salad bowl over with a freshly-cut onion, put in a layer of the potatoes, and sprinkle over them some finely-chopped parsley, tarragon, chervil, and some celery cut into dice; then add another layer of potatoes, and so on until the dish is full. Cover the potatoes with whipped cream which has been seasoned with salt and pepper and delicately flavoured with either tarragon or cucumber vinegar, and garnish round the edge of the bowl with watercress, and arrange some beetroot, cut into fancy shapes, in any suitable design on the cream. A rather more elaborate dish can be made by alternating the layers of potato with layers of truffles which have been simmered in white wine and cut into thin slices; but in this case cooked cucumber should be used in place of the beetroot.

#### SEA-KALE SALAD.

For this cooked sea-kale is used, and after being well drained on a cloth it should be cut up in pieces of a convenient size, and covered with mayonnaise which has either been made entirely or partially with cream, and mixed with sufficient chopped tarragon and chervil to give it a speckled appearance. Garnish the top of the salad with stars formed of fine strips of cooked cucumber, truffles, and red chillies, and place a little bunch of cress in the middle.

#### ARTICHOKE SALAD.

Make some Tartare sauce by adding to half a pint of mayonnaise a dessertspoonful of chopped gherkin, the same quantity of chopped capers, a teaspoonful each of finely-chopped chervil and tarragon, half a teaspoonful of burnet, and if the flavour is not disliked half a teaspoonful of minced chives. Dress some finely-shred crisp lettuce lightly with the sauce, and arrange it in the salad bowl, and put a little heap of chopped aspic in the middle. Take some cooked artichoke bottoms, from which the chokes have been removed—or some French *fonds d'artichauts* which are ready for use—and mask them neatly on the inside with Tartare sauce, then fill some of them with cooked green peas, others with chopped beetroot, and the remainder with finely-shred celery; place the artichokes in two lines round the salad bowl, so that the green, white, and red come in rotation.

#### ITALIAN SALAD.

Boil some young French beans in plenty of salted water until they are tender, then drain them on a cloth and let them get cold; the beans should be left whole, but the fibre should be removed; if fresh beans are not procurable, preserved haricots *vert* may be used instead, and, I think, with even a better result, provided the best kind—preserved in bottles, not tins—are obtainable. Place the beans in a basin, and dress them with salad oil and a small proportion of Italian red wine vinegar and cucumber vinegar, and season them lightly with salt and pepper. When they are ready arrange them in the salad bowl, and surround them with alternate slices of tomato and cucumber; on the former make a little lattice-work design with a few fine strips of preserved green capsicum, and on the slices of cucumber carry out the same design with strips of red capsicum.

#### ASPARAGUS SALAD.

Dip as many heads of asparagus (the French preserved asparagus answers admirably) as are required for the dish into some pale aspic which is cool, but not set, and place on ice until the jelly is firm. Fill a salad bowl with Batavian endive which has been cut into shreds with a silver knife and dressed with mayonnaise sauce to which a small quantity of thick cream has been added, and cover it with chopped tomato aspic. Arrange some of the asparagus so that the heads stand upright round the dish, and place the others on the aspic with the heads meeting in the centre, and between the asparagus make alternate lines with the sieved yolks and whites of two hard-boiled eggs.

#### SALADE A L'EMPIRE.

Fill a border mould with some clear tomato aspic, and just before it is required turn it out and fill the middle thus: Put a small quantity of shred lettuce, which has been lightly dressed with mayonnaise, at the bottom, then a layer of cooked cucumber cut into dice, and over this some cooked green peas; then more lettuce and sufficient thick mayonnaise to cover it. Scatter some finely-chopped truffle and minced white of egg evenly over the sauce, and decorate the top of the salad with small triangular pieces of raw tomato which have been sprinkled with chopped parsley. This can be converted into a substantial supper dish by putting layers of cold boiled fowl and tongue (both cut into fine strips) alternately between the ingredients named above.

CHARLOTTE RUSSE.

## OBSERVATIONS OF A FIELD NATURALIST.

#### A BRITISH TORTOISE.

A WELL-ESTABLISHED addition to the fauna of England is now the small European water-tortoise. Within my own knowledge no fewer than four specimens have been taken from the Thames during the last three years, at points so far apart as Guildford, Kingston, and Richmond. The size of the specimens varied from the circumference of a crown piece to about 4 in. in diameter, and two were taken by

anglers with hook and line. Such tortoises have been commonly sold in London as aquarium pets for many years; and their great activity, combined with unerring instinct for the direction of water, frequently aids them to escape; and it is now evident that the breed is established in the Thames at any rate.

#### BAD FOR FISH?

What effect the multiplication of river tortoises might have upon the stock of fish in the river remains to be seen. They are carnivorous, and eat greedily of any kind of animal food in captivity. A worm the tortoise quickly disposes of, with a series of dog-like snaps; and if small fish are introduced into the aquarium with him, he soon manages to get within biting distance. If the fish is strong enough it escapes, leaving a triangular chunk of its flesh in the tortoise's jaws; but a very small fish is quickly devoured. In his manner of attacking water-snails the tortoise displays much intelligence. He knocks one off the glass side of the aquarium with a pat, and follows it as it sinks to the bottom, waiting patiently with his nose close to the victim until it has fully extended its large flat foot. This the tortoise promptly bites off. Since our river-side birds and beasts of prey have been nearly exterminated, it is possible that the small water-tortoise may multiply until it becomes a nuisance. As yet, however, he is only an interesting visitor.

#### AN ARMADILLO ABROAD.

The possibilities of acclimatisation were rather weirdly brought to my mind one day last summer when I was cycling near Esher. Crossing the common which lies close to the railway station, at the point where four cross roads meet, I noticed some animal remains of unusual appearance on the road. Dismounting, I found that they were parts of an armadillo which had been crushed by a broad-wheeled cart. The whole body was not there, and what there was was painfully decomposed; but it would be interesting to know how even part of an armadillo came under the wheel of a country cart in such a rural district. The nearest house was some hundreds of yards away, and armadillos are not commonly kept even in country houses. If one of these creatures could survive the English winter, it could easily pick up a living on an English common, with abundance of earthworms and ants' eggs, with occasional birds' eggs, young birds, and frogs or carrion.

#### THE DESTRUCTIVE BULLFINCH.

As March slides to April the bullfinches become common objects more beautiful than welcome in my orchard. There is probably no other bird, British or foreign, which is such a universal favourite and at the same time such an unmitigated nuisance. The very best buds on the very best greengage trees or gooseberry bushes are all that he seems to care for at this season. He carefully selects the plumpest buds, and extracts therefrom the embryo flower and fruit, returning day after day to the same trees. By the time he has filled his little crop several times, a bushel of summer's fruit has been accounted for. For this reason we must never hope to see the bullfinch very common in England, and in Cornwall, as the "hoop," he is classed among the four birds—the other three being the trinity of iniquity: sparrow, magpie, and jackdaw—whose extermination is desired. Yet he may also be classed with the kingfisher, oriole, and crossbill as one of the four birds whose survival, as a splash of tropical colour in our dull landscapes, must be secured at all costs. Not too much bullfinch for our fruit, but just bullfinch enough to brighten the gardens now and then, is what we want.

#### BEES AND APPLES.

If our crops of greengages and gooseberries depend upon the absence of bullfinches in bud time, the apple harvest depends even more markedly upon the presence of bees in the days of bloom; and it is worth noting that every pound of honey made within a stone's throw of an orchard is worth its weight in silver to the apple grower. The tree, too, which has the good luck to be in full flower when the days are bright and sunny, and the bees all hard at work, will always, barring accidents later, bear a bumper crop; while another tree, coming into bloom a little earlier or later, when dull skies happen to prevail, and bees are sluggish, may be almost barren. The same principle applies, no doubt, to the hawthorn and other berry trees, whose crops pious tradition formerly supposed to be proportioned to the needs of the birds in the succeeding winter, whereas they are in reality regulated by the activity of bees and other insects in spring.

#### A BLESSING IN DISGUISE.

The severe weather which came in March illustrated the great advantage which so many early spring moths derive from the fact that their females are "wingless." When the evenings of February and March are soft and balmy, it seems hard that the poor little spider-like females should crouch at home on the bare bark of oak or elm, while the males are roaming fancy-free. But the balminess of February and March is no constant factor, and when the frost or driving snow comes, the dowdy little



female tucks herself and her spidery legs tight away in some deep crack, while the broad-winged male falls a fluffy victim to tomtit or Jack Frost. But so far as the survival of the species is concerned, it does not matter what happens to the male. The female was mated almost as soon as born, and *she* carries the future of the species. *He* is of no account.

#### A SIXTH SENSE.

These same moths of early spring illustrate, too, the evident connection between feathered antennæ and the peculiar power which many male insects possess of finding their way to the spot where a newly-hatched female is sitting. It is obvious that the males of those species which have "wingless" females—the

word "wingless" being used to mean "with rudimentary wings"—have special need of this power; and we accordingly find that they are almost without exception distinguished from related species by highly-feathered antennæ. Confirmatory evidence is furnished by the fact that in the case of two summer moths (of the genus *Orgyia*) whose females have rudimentary wings, the antennæ are also very heavily feathered; as they are also in other species, such as the Oak Eggar, whose males display a marked power of discovering the newly-born females, although the latter have large wings. Theories have been many and various as to the sense which these organs subserve, and we have not reached finality yet; but wireless telegraphy suggests much to a thinking mind.

E. K. R.



### "The Lucky Star."

WE have been invited to see "The Lucky Star" at the Savoy Theatre again, and in itself that invitation is a noteworthy sign of the theatrical times. A "second edition" at the Savoy! At one time the thought of such a thing would have seemed like sacrilege. It would have seemed like placing the classic Savoy on a level with the mere "musical comedy" houses. But other times, other manners. We have changed all that. The Gilbert-Sullivan alliance is a thing of the past. "Literary" comic-opera is dead. It had been moribund for some time; "The Lucky Star" has given it its quietus.

"The Lucky Star" began by being an Anglicised version of a successful American comic-opera; in its revised form, its "second edition," it has been retranslated into the language of the United States. In addition to colloquial Americanese, the entertainment has been embellished by the broadest of humour. For pure tomfoolery there has been of late years no piece at the Gaiety which would compare with it. It is very funny and quite harmless tomfoolery; there is nothing in the rough-and-tumble fun which is unworthy of anything save art—and perhaps not unworthy of that, for, after all, art has its degrees. Though the humours of "The Lucky Star" verge very close indeed on the pantomimic in their irresponsibility and their extravagance, there is nothing in them to cause a blush or that feeling of cold water trickling down one's back which one so often experiences when a manager—in want of a sensation and of money—panders to the prurient and to the indecent.

But let us make a few extracts from the libretto of "The Lucky Star" as it now stands—not in any carping or cavilling spirit, but as a curiosity. It will interest those who remember the wit and the finish and the literary qualities which used to distinguish the Savoy. Says somebody to the King: "Such a delicate commission will entail the most exhaustive research"; to which His Majesty replies: "I don't care if it entails housemaid's knee, so long as you find out what I want to know." Delicate repartee, of course, to which the style of the following is very similar; it is the answer of the monarch to a polysyllabic appeal: "If I had a vocabulary like that, I'd sell it and buy Consols." It is the same King (evidently sent to America in his youth to be educated) who tells us that he is "simply revelling in a gigantic jag of joy." Examining the physical condition of one of his subjects, this most colloquial sovereign bids his attendant to experiment with the north-east corner of the patient, while he—the King—diagnoses him on the south-west; and, a little later, issues this command: "Now, while I listen, you thump him in the neck, Roky—I mean in the back!"—Roky being the name of one of the characters and the note of exclamation being in the printed book. The diagnosis is continued, and embraces other gems of wit, of which this is a fair example: "I say! What are you trying to do? I didn't tell you to knock his shoulder-blade into my left ear. Hit him again now, easy!" The King's further remark that it is the last straw that gives the camel the hump is a *bon mot* particularly bright and novel. Nor are the witticisms and funniments by any means exhausted by these few quotations.

But let it be understood thoroughly that "The Lucky

Star" is a bright and joyous entertainment, for Mr. Ivan Caryll's music is full of tune, and the actors and actresses are full of spirit. Nothing prettier than the song "When I was at School," as sung by Miss Isabel Jay, could be wished for. Miss Jay has a piquant and pretty manner, a sweet voice, and a quick intelligence, and is a decided gain to the Savoy Theatre company. For comicality, the "train" trio in the second act is in itself almost sufficient to make "The Lucky Star" a capital entertainment. As a further sop to the spirit of the times, Mr. D'Oyly Carte has engaged one of the most brilliant and graceful dancers of the day, Miss Katie Vesey, a very young lady who established a reputation in the Adelphi pantomime.

Mr. Walter Passmore remains to lend his wonderful vitality and spontaneous humour to the piece, and Mr. Fred Wright now ably seconds him. But entirely out of the picture, a little too far removed from the Savoy tradition, is the clowning and "make-up" of Mr. Frank Manning. The pleasant voices of Mr. Henry A. Lytton, Mr. Robert Evett, Miss Ruth Vincent, and Miss Emmie Owen—who loses a great part of her personal charm by having to play the character of a boy—do the music full justice; the exceedingly handsome scenery and costumes embellish the story and add to the attractiveness of the whole entertainment. Success justifies everything; one hopes, for Mr. Carte's sake, that "The Lucky Star" will be a great success. Yet one cannot help wishing that success could have been won along the old lines. Perhaps Mr. Basil Hood, in his new opera, will make us laugh without lowering the standard which used to float so proudly over the home of English opera.

### DRAMATIC NOTES.

IN the full synopsis published of "Robespierre," Mr. Laurence Irving's adaptation of Sardou's play, soon to be staged at the Lyceum, there are many points of attraction, and many things which will stimulate the interest of the playgoer and strengthen his determination to be present on a first night which promises so much that is thrilling both before and behind the curtain. Who, for instance, is not dying to enjoy the scene of the spectres, where Robespierre sees, in a vision, the wraiths of those he has done to death—of the Queen, of Danton, and the rest? Who, with the memory of Sir Henry Irving's performance in "The Bells," would miss seeing him as the conscience-stricken, terror-haunted Revolutionist, cowering before the phantoms of the victims of his ambition? What pathos is promised us in that scene of the prison, where husbands are dragged from the sides of their wives, little children from the arms of their mothers, while the driver of the tumbril cracks his whip impatiently. What gaiety and pomp we expect in the Fête of the Supreme Being; what a realistic picture of the Convention in that reproduction of the meeting of the howling, screaming, blood-lusty, brute-men, who held poor bleeding France in the hollow of their gory hands, gathered together to compass the murder of the king-murderer of them all, the vulture, Robespierre. Expectantly we wait to see if Sardou will be able to convince us of that softer side of Robespierre's character, which he seeks to bring home to us by a purely imaginary incident in his life—a *liason* in his youth with a daughter of the aristocracy, by whom a son is born to him, and, twenty years after, condemned by him, unwittingly, to death. Yes, we are all on the *qui vive* for "Robespierre." Unless there is something very wrong of which we wot not, Sir Henry Irving has in store a great triumph, and glad we all shall be if this be so.

Mr. Willie Edouin—surely one of the most genuine humorists on the English stage—will next be seen in Mr. George Grossmith jun.'s burlesque at the Opera Comique, "Great Cæsar," in the title part. Mr. Edouin's Cæsar

should, indeed, be a sight for the gods. A strong company has been engaged, which includes Miss Decima Moore, and that most volatile and talented lady, Miss Ada Reeve, who has just that spark of genius which is as rare as it is unmistakable.

"L'Amour Mouillé," shortly to be seen at the Lyric Theatre, promises to take us back to poetical comic-opera—fantastical, too. It is, praise be to all concerned, in no way "up-to-date," a definition of which we are most of us by this time heartily tired. A little love story, dainty dresses, tuneful, unpretentious music, verse which scans and rhymes—all these minor blessings are promised us. London is to see in Miss Evie Green a new comer. She is described as a tall and handsome lady, as is necessary, for she is to play the princely hero. One is not usually addicted to girls as boys in opera; but now it will be a change. At any rate, it has been rendered necessary by the music, and by the fact that the Prince has to disguise himself as a girl. The character being played by a lady, there is nothing objectionable in this. We are promised, further, a feast for the eye in the Orange Fête in the last act, and a feast for several of the senses in the tarantella, to which especial attention is being devoted. M. Comelli, that wonderful and inexhaustible artist in costume, promises us some quaint effects, notably in the dresses of the nuns and novices, which will not be in any sense accurate reproductions of any uniforms ever worn by any nuns, but which, nevertheless, will suggest the convent and the veil.

PHŒBUS.



TEAM matches clamouring for notice that is long overdue are the matches of the House of Commons team against the Ranelagh Club and of Oxford University against Woking. The Legislature was too good for the club. Mr. Onslow Traherne led off well for the club by winning three holes from Mr. John Penn, Mr. Guy Pym had a hole the better of Mr. Montrose

Cloete, and Mr. Arthur Balfour lost by one to Sir William Russell. But this defeat of the Leader of the House Mr. Gerald Balfour, his brother, avenged with interest, taking four holes from Mr. Bramwell Davis. Mr. Henry Tollemache also got four holes from Mr. Wylie, but most of the matches were very close, and, with the exceptions mentioned, two holes was the biggest advantage gained in any individual match. The House of Commons won by eleven holes to seven.

And at Woking, too, it was the visiting team that had the advantage. All the matches here again were close, except one that Mr. H. C. Ellis won by four; and this was rather a notable win. Mr. H. G. B. Ellis was playing on the Woking side, and it might have been interesting if the two had met; but it was so arranged that Mr. Ernley Blackwell should play Mr. H. C. Ellis, and the latter, fresh from his wins from Mr. Tait and Mr. Low, again proved himself the rattling good golfer that we all now know him to be by winning from Mr. Ernley Blackwell, as aforesaid, on a green that the latter knows far better than he. Mr. H. G. B. Ellis was also a winner, but only by a single hole, from Mr. F. H. Mitchell and this single hole was the only hole that the Woking side won at all; and this although their side was really a strong one. The University, against this single hole, scored thirteen.

Mr. A. P. Horne had the lowest gross score, of 79, at the weekly competition at Oxford, but it was not good enough to win against Mr. Tomkinson's 87—12=75. While the brothers Hambro were engaged in playing for Biarritz against Pau, the Hambro bowl, a prize for tournament play on the Eastbourne green, open to any member of a Sussex golf club, was being competed for, and was finally won by a very steady player of the eight handicap class, Colonel E. W. Shaw. His opponent in the final tie was Mr. Peacock, one of the strongest of the Eastbourne players, who had to give seven strokes to the winner. The final match was a very close one, won only by one hole.

At the council meeting of the Ladies' Golf Union the chief business was the decision of the date of the ladies' championship, namely, May 9th, at Newcastle, County Down. There could not be a more worthy arena for the fray. The sand-hills and bunkers of the Newcastle links are of the finest and most formidable description, and every detail of the course is of first-class quality.

At Biarritz, Mr. Macie was winner of the big challenge prize, open to any member of a golf club in France. His score was 81—a steady, if not a remarkably brilliant, round. The cup given by the town for handicap tournament play was won by Mr. Gerard Chapman, with ten strokes allowed, who had for opponent in the final tie Mr. Birley, to whom he gave a stroke. At Cannes the club continues to play for numerous prizes, generally given for mixed foursome play, and all the competitions, dinners, and social gatherings are graced by the presence of many distinguished and Royal guests.

## THE BOAT RACE.

UNTIL the race of last Saturday was over, the writer of these lines always felt himself a somewhat inferior oarsman to his younger Oxford friends; for he rowed ten years ago, and until this 25th of March no Cambridge crew had ever got first to Mortlake since Muttelbury's victory in 1889. "It is a matter of satisfaction," said Lord Justice A. L. Smith, as he addressed the two crews and their predecessors on the night of the race, "that our long lane of defeats has at last turned the corner." And the cheering that greeted his remark was just as hearty from Dark Blues as from Light. That this double tribute was sincere, even in quarters where nothing save rivalry might legitimately be expected, is evident in the fact that Oxford has twice sent over her best coach to the Cam to teach her opponents the rowing that they seemed to have forgotten. For, as the same speaker pointed out on Saturday night, there has been nothing really wrong

either with Cambridge men or with the Cambridge river. It is not the tools that were at fault, only the workmanship, and good work was impossible while there were divisions in the camp. Nothing pulls a community together so much as victory, and Saturday's success is sure to have far more permanent results than the mere presentation of those eight gold medals which "mindful Cam" bestows upon her winning Blues.

That old and ever-welcome cry, "The favourite wins!" resumes not merely the Boat Race of 1899, but also a great deal of the feeling with which the preliminary phases of training for the struggle were watched by the greater public outside the Universities. If mariners have Dibdin's little "cherub up aloft," who watches from the maintop-gallant our Jack at sea, there must also be a Nemesis perched upon Putney Bridge who takes account of each man's prowess in the two great crews beneath, and measures out their

portion of reward and fame. For of all the men who have rowed for their Universities since 1829, only four men from Oxford (Willan, Cotton, Pitman, and Crum), and one from Cambridge (Muttelbury), have ever won the race in four successive years. Only two of these (Crum and Cotton) have occupied the same thwart all the time, and one of them is dead. If Gold had won on Saturday he would have been the only man alive, and the only man in the history of the race, who had been four times a winning stroke at Putney in the tenth consecutive win for Oxford, and who had never lost a race elsewhere. This was too much for the jealous gods, and they transferred their smiles from Gold to Goldie.

But it is time to turn from gossip of the past to that slight sketch of crashing oar-blades and swinging bodies which must represent the race of 1899. There was a sentimental preference for Cambridge as soon as they appeared on tidal waters; and they



Photo.

SPECTATORS ON THE MIDDLESEX BANK.

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soon justified this by a material improvement that showed the highest promise for their future. Oxford, on the other hand, never touched again the height of reputation they achieved on their home reaches. Whether five men from one college is not a good thing—though it may be a necessary thing—in a 'Varsity crew, or whether a long spell of victories had induced too great a confidence, or whether (as has been suggested) something went wrong in their training on the Cookham Reaches, the fact remains that the eight which could have beaten Cambridge over a four-mile course a month ago, could only stay with them to Hammersmith on Saturday. Fletcher had been very careful of his men; he brought them on slowly, and taught them their essentials first, and coached them by slow but sure degrees. Both Payne (No. 4) and the president, Etherington-Smith (No. 5), had learnt the science of long-sliding in the London Rowing Club; but into them, and into every other man beside them, Fletcher instilled the knowledge of that slow, smashing, irresistible leg drive, of which himself at Oxford and Murtlebury at Cambridge have perhaps been the finest exponents in recent races on the tideway. With that and a long, steady swing, any eight that "gets together" may be sure to give a good account of itself. And all these things the Light Blues learnt and did.

When Willan's voice rang out in the silence at Putney Bridge on Saturday, it would have been hard indeed for anyone

who had never seen the crews before to pick the winner. But such a critic would not have long been left in doubt. The sixteen blades clashed in together to a splendid start, Gold being a trifle faster in the stroke, and Gibbon covering a little more water. Slowly the dark blue oars went a trifle to the front, as the crews passed the London Boathouse, and the Oxford steamer recognised it with a stentorian cheer. But at Craven Steps, Cambridge, who had won the toss and taken the Surrey side in a west wind, began to close up to their foes without making much apparent exertion. But the advantage was lost by bad steering just when the boats were very close together, and Oxford went ahead again at about the mile post. But that long swing and steady leg drive soon began to tell, and rowing with enormous though restrained power, the Cambridge boys were dead level again at the Crab Tree, both crews rowing thirty-six to the minute, and evidently eager to make the race to Hammersmith a test of pace. If it had been Gold's idea to bustle the less-experienced Gibbon at the start, he was woefully mistaken, for no one ever took a better measure of his rival than the Cambridge stroke seemed to do at this moment. He waited till the boats were opposite Harrod's, where the geometrical curve of the bank would be in his favour, and then put in a few extra strong and lengthy strokes, securing, by a most judicious effort, the lead which he was never to lose again.

At the two-mile post Oxford were well behind, and as a matter of fact were already beaten, though Gold would never have acknowledged it. Past Chiswick Eyot the dark blue oars were labouring in a wind that had got up steadily ever since the start; and the rising tide, that was considerably rougher as they went by Thorneycroft's to Corney Reach, bothered all the Oxford men in their efforts to back up their plucky stroke. Seven was not only late, but short, and rowing very differently from the traditions of that place some few years ago. But, after all, you cannot pick up Crums every day. And bow was by no means showing the watermanship expected at his thwart, his efforts chiefly resulting in throwing water on to three. Barnes Bridge is three and a-half miles from the start, and Cambridge sailed comfortably under it, some three and a-half lengths to the good,

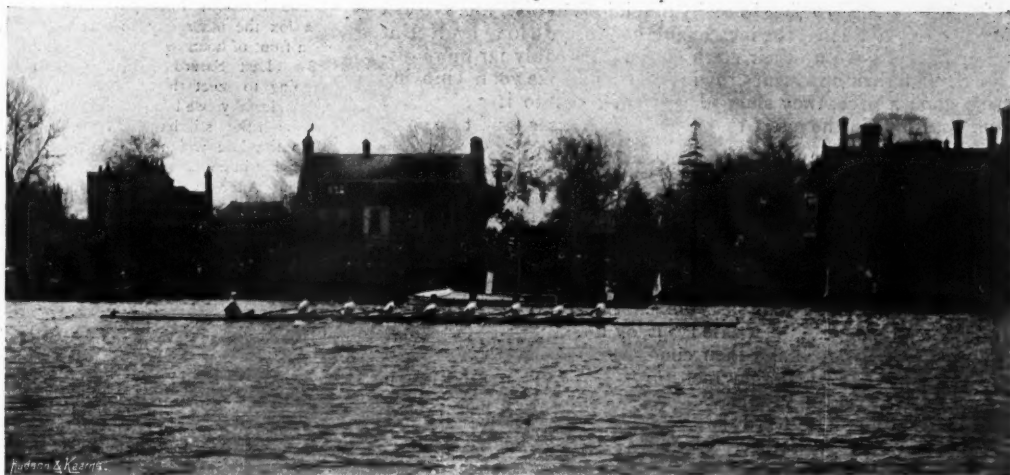


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CAMBRIDGE FINISH IN EXCELLENT FORM.

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Photo.

OXFORD FINISH COMPLETELY ROWED OUT.

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Photo

OUTSIDE THE IBIS CLUB AFTER THE RACE.

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swinging long, and rowing so easily that it looked little more than a strong paddle. Such is the inestimable comfort of a long lead! But Oxford never gave up their stern chase. Palpably far more distressed than their opponents, rowing a faster stroke yet not moving at so good a pace, they slugged their bodies into it and pulled their souls out in the effort to get up. Two races (and two only) have been won by crews that were behind at Barnes, and one of them by Gold himself. But he must have felt that this year his task was an impossible one. You cannot pull a racing eight alone, and not a man behind him had an ounce more power left than he was already giving. So Etherington-Smith's crew swung past the winning-post, victorious Cantabs after nine years of defeat, and happily strode out of their boat up to the dressing-rooms. Oxford were far more done. Several of the crew shut up like a knife as the cox cried "Easy all," and it says much both for their strength and their condition that every man looked fit and well again when they met "their friends the enemy" at dinner later on that day.

The presence of Lord Justice A. L. Smith in the chair, presiding over that gathering of famous oars of many ages, reminded me of a still greater occasion only a few years ago, when he sat with his "brother Chitty," with Lord Esher and with Lord Macnaghten, as a guest at the dinner given by the "Old Blues" to the four of their number who were Justices in the High Court of Appeal. The one who looked the youngest of them all has left us first. Lord Esher lives to resume much more than a half-century of rowing history. His first race was in the first year of the Queen's reign, and I can well remember his greeting to the crews of 1889. "Fifty years ago," said he, "I rowed in the race that has been won and lost again to-day. My fervent wish for you is that fifty years from now you may be all as well—aye, and as happy—as I am to-night." Few sentences more typical of the occasion, and of the best spirit that is fostered by the Boat Race, could be chosen to close this account of one that will go down to posterity as "the turn of Cambridge luck." "Ever to excel, and to surpass others" is the Homeric motto of the annual contest of the Blues. That they remember it, not merely at Putney, but in the race-course of their after life, such men as Lord Esher and Lord Justice A. L. Smith are amongst us still to prove.

T. A. C.



THE snap of cold weather of the past week may perhaps slightly lengthen our hunting season. The spring weather had brought on seeds so fast that hunting would have been likely to do harm. Now everything is put back, and should the frost break up with a fall of rain, we might have some good days. The Belvoir have felt the dry weather very much on the Lincolnshire side, and of scent there has been none. Lincolnshire always dries up quickly in the spring, and over the dusty ploughs hounds cannot hunt. The bad scent too often gives people the idea that foxes are scarce, for it is often forgotten that on a bad scenting day many foxes are drawn over, or slip away unnoticed. Turning to the Quorn, the Tom Firr Testimonial has reached over £2,000, and should be at double that sum before it closes. These hounds have still a few mangy foxes on their borders, but I hear that Captain Burns-Hartopp means to try to stamp out the curse before next season.



W. A. Rouch.

THE STANDS, LINCOLN.

The infection has spread over the border, where Lord Harrington found a fox the other day so eaten up with the disease that it could scarcely crawl in front of hounds.

Last Saturday week I found myself, after an interval of some years, going to meet the Bicester at Boddington. I thought the hounds looked wonderfully well after the hard season, and they have improved in quality, though they still have that wonderful way of casting themselves and of picking up the line which marked them when I saw them last. The new Master was already in command. The meet was on the Northamptonshire side at Boddington. After a very pretty find, we had forty minutes, more or less, over a nice country and at a very fair pace, and to ground at Friars Marston. The scent was serving, but it was pretty to see the way hounds made the best of it, driving forward, and casting themselves at a gallop to right or left, and recovering the scent when lost. With a good start and a good horse it was a very enjoyable hunt for a lover of hounds. Monday found me back at Six Hills with the Quorn. Never have I felt a more wretched day, and had almost gone home but for the sight of that fine old sportsman, Lord Crawshaw, apparently enjoying himself in spite of the east wind and the excellent imitation of a Canadian blizzard which swept over the bleak-looking landscape. Did you ever hear of the bride who refused to go out calling in an east wind because she did not wish to make "a red-nosed impression"? I was a good deal struck with the keenness with which some of our best and boldest riding ladies disregarded the danger. But their courage did not go unrewarded, for after losing a most unsatisfactory fox that hounds could hunt no longer than they could see him, we had some really good sport. By the time hounds got to Thruxington Woods matters had improved, and when at length a fox was persuaded to leave, we found that if they could not go very fast they could hunt. Tom Firr brought plenty of drive into the kennel, and in consequence we could never afford to loiter. Some little time was spent in Ragdale Wood, where the fox took advantage of the very moderate scent to hang for some time in covert. He could always keep in front of hounds, and at last, after a nice ring round near the place of meeting, beat us at Thruxington, whence he had come.

Mr. Austen Mackenzie's retirement and the presentation to him of a testimonial reminds me that one of the most successful Masterships of modern days has come to a close. A good huntsman, Mr. Mackenzie was a wonderful hound breeder, and the pack which has taken him nineteen years to get together is one of the best in England. Fortunately, the bitch pack remains in the county, while the dog pack has gone to Badminton. The presentation took the form of two capital pictures, by Mr. G. A. Giles, the soldier-sportsman painter, who has the advantage of painting subjects to which the knowledge and experience of a lifetime enable him to give vividness and reality. It is not every artist who has ridden a charge or a steeplechase before painting them. Everyone expects a very successful time in the North Pychley with Lord Southampton as Master. He has handled the horn before, as he hunted the 10th Hussars' hounds when that regiment was in Ireland.

On Monday, as I journeyed to the meet of the Brookside Harriers at Falmer, so intense was the cold that even a fast trot scarcely imparted the necessary warmth. Mr. Beard commenced by drawing the seed-field which is a little way south-east of Falmer Church, and after a short delay a hare was found. At first she ran towards Newmarket Arch, but soon swung to the right, and ran over Loose Bottom. She then ran a circle round Newmarket Plantation, and once more sought shelter in the gorse to the west of this covert. Hares were now probably changed, for there were several on foot, and hounds presently hunted one as far as Castle Hill. The pack then twice hunted their quarry across that big, rough, wire-enclosed field that stretches from the ridge of the Downs near Newmarket Hill almost to the railway line. Afterwards they ran on towards Kingston Hill, where I was obliged to desert and turn homewards.

I had hoped to write an account of Thursday's sport with the Southdown, but, owing to frost and an absence of rain, the Downs are in no fit state for horses which have been regularly with hounds during this long trying season.

On Friday (March 24th) the Southdown were advertised to meet at Kentons, Henfield, but owing to a sharp frost over-night hounds did not even leave their kennels. In my recollection hunting has never been stopped so late in the season in the South of England; but we live in an age of record-breaking.

X. &amp; Y.

## THE LINCOLN HANDICAP.

THE first, and therefore the most open, of all the more important events of the racing season is the Lincoln Handicap. As none of the horses taking part in it have been seen in public since the previous November, their present form has to be taken entirely on trust by the public; while even those who are most intimately connected with them are apt to be misled by their trying tackle, the form of which is also more or less a matter of guesswork so early in the year. On this occasion, Le Blizon having come out in winning form on the first day of the meeting, his stable companion, Hawfinch, naturally became more fancied than ever, especially as his owner declared to everyone that he would win. He could never, however, depose Clipstone from his premier position in the betting, the believers in condition especially sticking to Blackwell's charge, who had done more work than anything. Last year's winner, Prince Barcaldine, was naturally backed when it became known that he was the best of Robinson's lot, and Knight of the Thistle had supporters, in spite of his infirmity, as also had that good three year old, Lord Edward II.

Inspection of the starters in the paddock was rendered difficult by the fact that they carried no distinguishing numbers, as they do on every other course in these days; but the favourite,

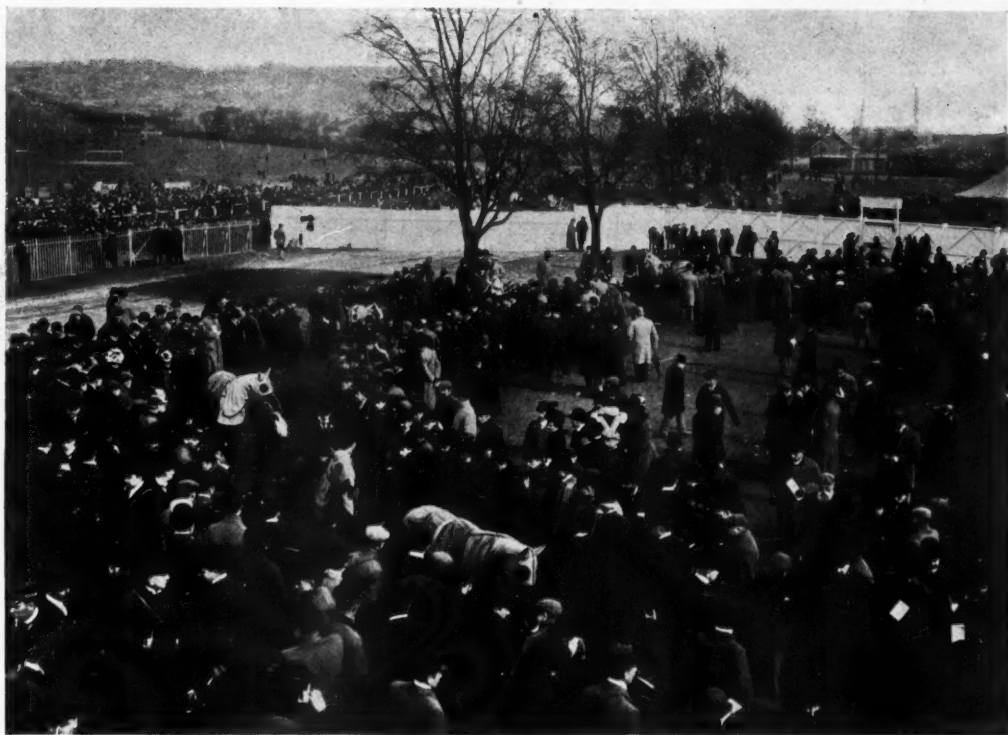
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who was otherwise not much liked, looked trained to the hour, whilst Rookwood also looked particularly well, and Knight of the Thistle was fit to run for his life. Lord Edward II. was much admired, and Kilcock was, as he always is wherever he goes, the gentleman of the party. He did not look to me as well as I have seen him, however; and Hawfinch, to my surprise, was disfigured with a hood. It will be a thousand pities if this unlucky colt has turned rogue, but after the condition in which he was sent to run last spring, I should not be a bit surprised if he had. There was a tremendous crowd in the paddock, of which an illustration will be found herewith, and it was some time before I could find General Peace, but when I did I thought I had never seen him looking so well.

There was the usual delay at the post, this time caused by Court Ball breaking away and running the whole course before he could be pulled up. Why in the name of common-sense is this sort of thing tolerated, when it could be so easily obviated by the use of the starting-gate? When the flag fell he was "left," and Little Eva jumped away in front. She soon, however, had to resign the lead to her stable companion, General Peace, who crossed over to the rails, and drew out with a long lead. For seven furlongs Kilcock ran a great horse, whilst Knight of the Thistle, Nun Nicer, and Lord Edward II. were all going well at this point, though even here it was obvious that the leader had won his race, and I should be sorry to say how much he had in hand as he passed the post, four lengths in front of Knight of the Thistle, with the three year old Lord Edward II. third, and Nun Nicer fourth, although the positions of the two last would have been reversed had Sir J. Blundell Maple's mare been ridden out.

Here was a surprise indeed. That the winner was once a good horse, and was leniently treated on his best form, no one could deny, but after his last year's form it was difficult to believe in him, though I was very glad for his owner's sake to see him win, and I hope he had a good race. That a roarer like Knight of the Thistle should be able to run second over this severe mile, was another surprise; whilst Lord Edward II. carried a lot of weight for a three year old at this time of year; and no one expected that charming mare Nun Nicer to do as well as she did, considering the trouble she has had in her knees. Taken as a whole, it was probably a moderate field, though the winner is perhaps useful over this



W. A. Rouch.

INSPECTING HANDICAP HORSES IN PADDOCK.

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distance; and of the rest the most likely to do well in the future may be Lord Edward II., Succoth, and Rookwood. Hawfinch I am afraid I must give up, after seeing him wear a hood, and the favourite ran a rank impostor, never being able to go the pace.

There are also illustrations of the beautiful Kilcock, about whom it always seemed to me ridiculous to suppose that he would get the severe Lincoln mile, and Prince Soltykoff's Leisure Hour, a neatly-made four year old, by St. Simon out of Love in Idleness, leading the parade; and another showing General Peace cantering home in front of Knight of the Thistle, with Lord Edward II. just beating the pulling up Nun Nicer for third place.

## Racing Notes—Lincoln and Liverpool.

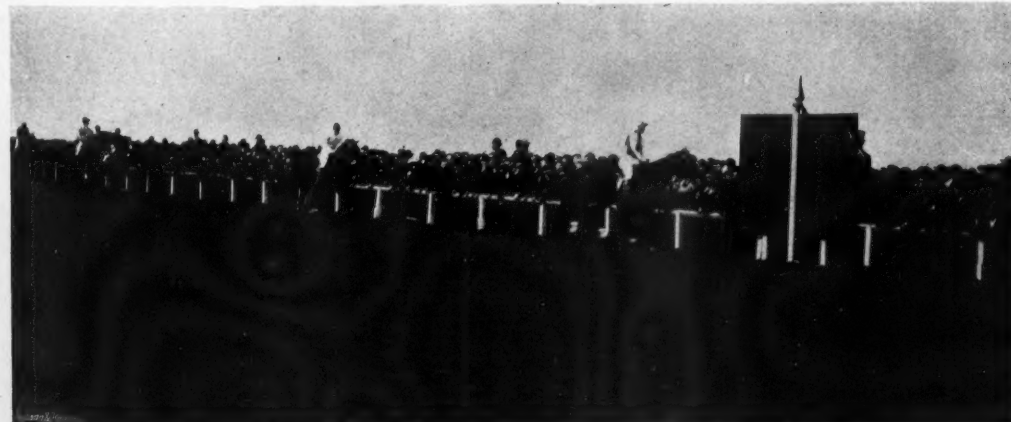
THE opening week of a new racing season has been brought to an issue, the first important handicap of the year has been lost and won, the earliest of this year's two year olds have made their bow to the public, and we have learnt, from what we have seen on a race-course, the truth, or the reverse, of some of the many gallops which have taken place at home. In writing these notes I always endeavour to avoid wearying my readers with long and dry descriptions of such events as are unlikely to have any bearing on the future, and so far as possible to pick out only such races as are of real importance in themselves or look like proving a useful guide in finding future winners. To go straight to the point, therefore, I must begin by drawing the attention of my readers to the victory of Le Blizon, in the Bathany Stakes, on the first day of the Lincoln Meeting. It may, perhaps, be remembered that Mr. Bottomley bought this useful-looking son of Xaintrailles and Sunny Queen at the sale of M. Lebaudy's horses. The first time I saw him race after that, I wrote in these notes that I considered him a remarkably promising two year old. He won three races off the reel in Mr. Bottomley's colours last year, and his last Monday's success makes his fourth successive victory. I still believe that he is a good colt, and better than most people may think, and he will probably pay for following this year. Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's Little Bob was made favourite, but Le Blizon, jumping off in front, made all the running, and won by three-parts of a length from the unlucky Prosset. The winner's breeding is quite worth notice, his paternal grand dam being by Flying Dutchman out of a Touchstone mare, whilst his dam is inbred to the same two strains on



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KILCOCK AND LEISURE HOUR LEAD THE PARADE.

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FINISH OF THE LINCOLN HANDICAP.

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her inside quarterings, as well as bringing in a cross of Galopin. She, therefore, not only gives back to Xaintrilles his hardest blood, but also supplies him with the Blacklock strain, which has always nicked so well with that of the Flying Dutchman.

The principal event of the second day was, of course, the Lincoln Handicap, which, being fully dealt with elsewhere, need not be gone into here, more than to say that the favourite, Clipstone, ran very badly, that Hawfinch disappointed me, and has, I am afraid, turned cunning, at which I am hardly surprised, all things considered, and that Lord Edward II., Succoth, Rookwood, and probably Nun Nicer will all win races before the season is much older. The winner, General Peace, who won with any amount in hand, has probably come back to his best form, and, if so, this will not be his final handicap victory in 1899.

A very smart sprinter is the well-bred filly Esmeralda II., by Rightaway, dam by Galopin out of Brw Lass, and I was much surprised to see her start at such a long price as 20 to 1 for the Brocklesby Trial Stakes of five furlongs, which she won in a canter from Lady Athel. Of the seventeen two year olds who turned out for the Lincoln Stakes, Mr Leopold de Rothschild's Cracko, by that handsome little sire, Lactantius, was made favourite, although he had been bested in a home gallop by his stable companion Hu'cot. He won, too, by a length and a-half, which of course made Hulcot start a warm favourite for the Brocklesby Stakes next day.



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## MANIFESTO IN THE Paddock.

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got beaten in the Union Jack Stakes, and the March Stakes and the Molyneux Stakes were won by children of Isinglass and St. Simon respectively.

Mr Rose must be almost sorry now that a long price tempted him to sell Bonavista to go abroad, especially as this beautifully-bred sire has begun the new season with two winners in the first week. The first of these was the two year old Ambrizette, a home-bred chestnut filly, out of Polly Marden, who won the Sefton Park Plate in very nice style indeed. The Tyro Stakes, also for two year olds, was won by Salad, a son of Captain Fife's big-boned Hazlethatch, and then Mr. Vyner, whose stable appears to be in form, won the Hylton Handicap of five furlongs with Mintstalk, son of Minting, who had some speedy sprinters behind him.

On Saturday Bonavista scored his second success of the week as a sire when Lord Stanley's Loreto won the Liverpool Plate, over a mile and three furlongs, from Barford, Pedant, and Ultimatum. The most important feature of the week's racing, of course, has been the running of the two year olds, of whom I think we have seen one or two useful samples. That Hulcot is a promising youngster I feel quite certain, whilst Styria is quite a quick sort. Planudes is no doubt above the average, and the 3,200 guineas yearling Simonside will doubtless get his purchase-money back. Messrs. Pratt and Co. seem determined to make their meetings at Alexandra Park "go," and I have little doubt that under their able and up-to-date management this once-despised race-course will become an exceedingly popular one. There will be a capital day's sport there on Saturday, and the London Cup of a mile and a-quarter ought to produce an interesting race, if Hawfinch, Succoth, Prince Barcalaine, Spooz, and Lord Edward II. all go to the post.



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## THE PRINCE'S HORSE.

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For this, the first important two year old event of the season, fourteen more or less highly-tried juveniles put in an appearance. The well-bred Styria, by St. Simon out of Pannonia, having also been well galloped at home, trod closely on the heels of Hulcot in the market. These two had the finish to themselves, as Styria, who was quickest away, made the running till close home, where Hulco, who had got off badly, worked his way through, and running his race out with remarkable stoutness, beat Sir R. Waldie Griffith's smart filly by half a length. The winner is evidently a rare stayer, to explain which we have only to look at his pedigree. By Crafton (who is by Kisber out of Chopette, and therefore inbred to Rataplan, through Mineral and Mahala) out of Queen of the Riding, by Galopin (inbred to Blacklock) from Queen of Diamonds, by King of Trumps, he is a splendid example of the success of inbreeding to those two stout strains, Birdcatcher and Blacklock. He ought to make a grand stayer if he is trained to stay.

The blue and yellow cap, which has thus won the Brocklesby Stakes for the fourth year in succession, was in front again when the useful Jaquemart, who is a son of the beautifully-bred Martagon, won the Queen's Plate, and he too will probably do good service in the same colours before the curtain is rung down on the season just begun.

There was nothing very important about the first day's racing at Liverpool, though I was glad to see Chon Kina win the Prince of Wales's Plate. I have always had a liking for this compactly-built son of Saraband and St. Cicely, but he was so uncertain last year that I had to give up hoping that he would ever fulfil expectations. He must have been a good colt the day he beat Nun Nicer as a two year old at Kempton Park, granted that she had not then quite come to her best, and if last week's victory gives him confidence I shall expect to see him show some return to his two year old form. Blackwing



NOW that the Liverpool Spring Meeting is over, and the Grand National of 1899 has been lost and won, there will not be much more sport "between the flags" to write about until November next comes round, except, of course, the big Manchester chase, and the hunt meetings, which, although in most cases real sporting affairs, and more interesting than anything else to the inhabitants of the districts in which they take place, are not in these days, as a rule, of any great interest to the general public.

There was a good meeting last week at Chepstow, where Soliman, with 10 to 1 laid on him, cantered away with the Monmouthshire National Hunt Flat Race, as he naturally would do, and Missionary gave a lot of weight away to



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## PREPARING TO PARADE.

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everything in the Tintern Steeplechase, which he won with the greatest ease by twelve lengths.

The Cavalry Brigade also held their meeting at Aldershot, of which there is nothing worth noting here, except that the sport was quite up to the usual average, and, but for the weather, it was in every respect a very pleasant afternoon.

Other meetings having been postponed through frost, the followers of cross-country sport had to wait for Liverpool, on arrival at which they learnt of the scratching of County Council for the Grand National. Next came the elimination of Drogheda, and so two most dangerous candidates were removed.

It has been a curious Grand National. At one time it looked like being a particularly good one, and, as it turned out, it has been an unusually bad one. That Manifesto is a very genuine and high-class chaser, and would win, if several others did not, was obvious from the first, but at the same time he had a very big weight to carry, and there were one or two who looked bound to beat him if they stood up. That is just what they did not do. County Council and Drogheda, both of whom must have beaten him, bar accidents, had they gone to the post at their best, went lame, and had to be scratched. Gentle Ida, The Sapper, and Lotus Lily fell, as did many others, and altogether, without wishing in any way to depreciate Mr. Bulteel's genuinely high-class chaser, there can be no denying that his victory was a somewhat lucky one, whilst the fact that two such commoners as Ford of Fyne and Elliman finished second and third plainly proves the mediocrity of the form.

To give the details of the race, of which some very graphic illustrations will be found herewith, the much-fancied The Sapper, who must otherwise have very nearly won, seeing the position occupied, by Ford of Fyne, came to grief at the second fence. Valentine's Brook was fatal to Gentle Ida, who, in my opinion, only had to stand up to win, and Lotus Lily was the next to come to grief. Mum was first over the water in front of the stands, with Sheriff Hutton, Electric Spark, Manifesto, Ambush II., Xebec, Dead Level, and Elliman all going well. Coming on to the race-course the second time, Ford of Fyne, Manifesto, and Elliman were going best, whilst Xebec having fallen two fences from home, Manifesto went to the front just where he did two years ago, and won easily by five lengths from Ford of Fyne, with Elliman, two lengths behind, third.

When first I saw the weights for this race I picked Gentle Ida, Manifesto, Drogheda, and County Council, and these four I stuck to. The last two did not start, the first fell, and Manifesto won. I always wrote down the chance of Ambush II., because I know what an exceptionally good five year old it takes to win this race, whilst the fact that Ford of Fyne finished second shows where Gentle Ida would have been but for her fall. Manifesto is an undoubtedly good horse, but no one can honestly say the same for any of the lot that finished behind him, with the possible exception of Ambush II.; and, taken altogether, it is in my opinion one of the worst Grand Nationals of modern years.

The only jumping event on the first day's card was the Stanley Five Year Old Steeplechase. For this, Covert Hack, who had run third to Fanciful and Constantine at Chepstow earlier in the week, started favourite, and finished first of the only four out of eight starters who got the course. It was a bitterly cold day for the game, and neither horses nor riders looked as if they liked it much, except, perhaps, the winner, who is a big, bold jumper, and evidently well suited by the Aintree country. Hobinoe was the first to lose his balance, Hidden Mystery was the next to fall, and then Harling came to grief, and bolted riderless into the canal—a foolish proceeding on such an afternoon. Lomax was then pulled up, and Covert Hack, playing with his opponents, cantered home eight lengths in front of Virginia Boy.

Ten runners turned out for the Liverpool Hurdle Handicap, the opening event of the last day, and these included the over-rated Heal, Constantine, who had run well at Chepstow earlier in the week, Turkish Bath, and the Spring Cup dead-heater Crestfallen, whose first appearance over "sticks" it was. Very well he jumped too, and would undoubtedly have got home first had not Constantine jumped right across him at the last hurdle, and so beaten him by three lengths. An objection naturally followed, the winner being promptly disqualified. Lord Stanley's novice added 350 sovs. to his half of the Spring Cup Stakes. Everyone was glad to see the Count de Geloes rewarded for his pluck in bringing his five year old mare, Pistache, over to this country to run



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THE PARADE FOR THE GRAND NATIONAL.

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A VIEW DOWN THE AINTREE COURSE.

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in the Grand National, by winning the Champion Steeplechase, and as she was in receipt of 9lb. only from Sweet Charlotte, whom she beat by eight lengths, she is no doubt a very useful young chaser. So ended one of the best week's sport we are likely to see for some time to come.

OUTPOST.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### TO KEEP OFF TRAMPS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Allow me to recommend "Rustic" a simple, but such an effective, plan, that I believe if he tries it he will "find immediate relief." He no doubt has some coach roads on his estate, and as these always seem to require rolling, let him politely offer each tramp 6d. an hour to roll them, or give them the same amount for a good hour's digging. This plan has been adopted by a retired general, my next neighbour, and has been used by us both with such excellent results that, although we too are on a main road between two towns, I almost forget what a tramp looks like.—SAFE AT LAST.

SIR,—If your correspondent "Rustic" will keep a bloodhound or two able to hunt the "clean boot," he will find (as I have) that tramps lose all interest in him or his. It is more than a remedy—it is a charm!—ARTHUR O. MUDIE.

SIR,—"Rustic" asks the best mode of keeping away tramps. I have been told by one who knows, that if you chalk a circle with a round dot in the middle or it on your door or gate, tramps will clear off at once at the sight of it. It is one of their own marks, and means, I suppose, "no good to be got here."—J. FRANCIS.

## WINTER FLOWERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can you or any of your readers tell me through your beautiful and interesting paper the names of any plants not very hard to rear which, with a little forcing, could be made to flower about Christmas in a very sunny conservatory, and in January? I do not want very large plants, or expensive ones. —NANCY H. EDDOWES.

[We alluded to this important subject in our weekly notes. If you could obtain a few camellias in pots, and give them a little warmth in winter, they would soon bloom naturally at Christmas, because they produce their new shoots and set their buds early in the spring. The same thing would occur with white azaleas. Then you may have white marguerites in bloom at Christmas, if you will keep a few young plants in the summer grown in pots, well exposed to the air, and all flower-buds picked off until September, when they may begin to bloom. Zonal pelargoniums from early spring-struck cuttings, grown on into 6in. pots, and kept hard pinched all the summer outdoors, then got under glass in September, and having a little liquid manure, bloom in gentle warmth all the winter. One or two late chrysanthemums, such as Lady Selborne, Ethel, or Golden Gem, the plants kept cool till the beginning of December, will bloom in a warm house profusely later. A quantity of Roman hyacinths, potted in August, and placed under 3in. of cocoa-nut fibre refuse outdoors for two months, then got under glass, soon bloom. If seed of pure white intermediate stocks be sown in June, the plants dibbled into 3in. pots, five plants in a pot, they will bloom in the winter. But, of course, the majority of Christmas and January flowers are forced. Chinese primulas and Marguerite carnations, from seed sown in April, will bloom readily under glass at the time you mention.—ED.]

## SEASIDE SHELL GRAVEL FOR GARDEN PATHS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am anxious to procure some good seaside shell gravel for my garden paths. Could you through the medium of your paper inform me where I am likely to be able to get it?—WOODS.

[You would be wise to obtain the seaside gravel, really shingle, from the neighbourhood of the mouth of the Severn, say Newport or Cardiff, as those places seem to be nearest to you by rail. But can you not obtain somewhere inland a better gravel than loose seaside shingle? It may be excellent material for making concrete walks, especially useful in such hilly districts as Malvern, where the heavy rains often upset gravel paths sadly. To be constantly walking, however, upon a loose gravel path is a trial, besides leading to perpetual weed growth. We advise you to apply to the station agent at Malvern Links for information as to cost of procuring gravel by rail. Cartage from there to you would be a considerable item. If you could consult some horticulturist in the neighbourhood you would do well. Such an one as Mr. Fielder, the gardener at St. James's House. In these gardens turf forms delightful walks, and when properly made no walks can be better in a hilly district, and especially where, as in your case, gravel is difficult to obtain.—ED.]

## COLD TEA FOR FLOWERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This is an expedient that I have lately learned. It may be very familiar to most, but was new to me, so possibly may be new to others. At a certain cottage near us lives an old woman who makes a wonderful success of her Malmaison carnations, grown in the open air. We wondered for a long while how she contrived to rear them better than all her neighbours, until one day, in a moment of confidence, she let out the secret, or what she believed to be the secret—she always gave them the emptyings of the teapot. I say what she believed to be the secret, because we, trying the same experiment, did not get it to answer to the same extent, though I believe we did improve our carnations a little by it. I am not at all sure that that was not merely because they got more regular watering than before. But in any case, we found it did ferns in pots an undeniable deal of good. I hope I am not telling a tale that has been told altogether too often in writing you this letter; but as it was new to me, so it may be to others.—D. L. M.

## SMALL SUMMER COTTAGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The writer of an article in COUNTRY LIFE of March 18th on "Summer Cottage" mentions that he had from time to time shown illustrations of small cottages. We have been trying for some time to find a cottage within reasonable distance of London, and are thinking of taking a bicycle tour through the country north-west and west of London, commencing from Berkhamstead and ending in Surrey, near Chiddingfold. If you can give us any hints as to villages which we might visit in that direction, with a view to seeing cottages, or sites on which to build, we shall be indebted to you very much. Our requirements are modest, but we wish to be in pretty country.—MRS. F. BULLOCK.

[The illustrations shown were not of cottages to let; but your plan of taking a cycling tour is an excellent way of finding a suitable place, and the route suggested is a good one. Perhaps some of our correspondents can suggest an answer, or give their experiences.—ED.]

## TAME OTTER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see in your "Country Notes" you mention the capture of two otters near Arcachon. May I say that I had the pleasure, a few years ago, of making the acquaintance of an otter that had been caught in one of the streams of the Pyrenees—in the Basses-Pyrenees, the next department to the Gironde, in which, of course, Arcachon lies. But my object in writing is not merely to confirm what you say about the presence of otters in this part, but to speak a little further, if you will allow me, of the capture and death of this Pyrenean otter, both of which are a little curious. The young otter was brought to a friend of mine by a Basque, a native of the country. He said that he had shot the old otter—he had her skin to confirm this—and that she was carrying the young one in her mouth. This is a statement that a good many found hard to credit. I cannot conceive why. We know that tigers, dogs, cats, and numerous animals, when their young are not yet able to walk much, carry them from place to place in their mouths. Why should not the otter do so? If the otter, in making her escape from a place where she had been disturbed, or moving from any easily-conceived motive, wished to take her young with her, in what other way would she do so than by carrying them in her mouth? But we may leave this point. This was the account that the Basque gave, and for my own part I can see no reason for doubting it. The baby otter was so great a baby (or so small a baby) that it

could not eat; but a canine mother was offered it, and the foster-child and foster-mother took to each other just as kindly as if they had been one species. So the otter grew up. He became quite tame, and would play with his owner like a dog, always keeping his affection for his foster-mother. My friend had a tank made in the grounds, with a little stream of water running through it, and here the otter would play and splash about quite happily. They used to feed him on fish—live fish; but I am sorry to say that they could not give him enough, or big enough, fish for me to be able to say anything about a question that I see has been raised in your interesting paper as to the otter's mode of feeding, whether he begins from the tail or the shoulder of the fish. This otter was a hungry fellow. It was hard work and rather expensive to find fish enough for him to eat at all. Generally they were small fish, so that his jaws took them in altogether, and it was hard to say whether he intended gripping them by the tail or head; and, besides, the poor fellow was generally so hungry, that he seemed ready to take whichever end of a fish came first. But it was wonderful to see how he caught the fish in their own element. His quickness of turning, even within the narrow space of his tank, was extraordinary. He was quite docile, and knew his master quite well—would even play with him like a dog. Then he died, poor fellow; in great pain as they thought. They had an examination. The doctor whom they had summoned to attend him had said that he had an *embarras gastrique*, but that did not seem to diagnose his case very closely. The post-mortem made it all very clear—yes, painfully clear. The "embarrassment" was in the nature of a fish-hook. It was very evident what had happened. The otter had swallowed a fish that had been taken by a hook, and the hook had broken off in the fish. The otter digested the fish, but not the hook, so he, poor fellow, died. My friend mourned his death very much, for he had had his pet about six years then, and was much attached to him. During all this while the creature had appeared in perfect health, until the unhappy fish-hook came, and perfectly happy. I hope that this little history may not seem too long, and may, perhaps, be of interest to some of the many of your readers who are, no doubt, equal lovers of animals with myself.—ST. JEAN DE LUZ.

## LEARNING TO SHOOT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Is it not just possible that the two, "Sagittarius" and "F. L. A.," writing on the above subject, are really less at variance than their letters would show and than they themselves think? "Sagittarius" says, in effect, that the young shooter is to be taught to put up his gun pointing right at the object, then to swing ahead, and fire so as to intercept the quarry. "F. L. A." objects to this as likely to lead to "poking," and prefers that the young gun should be taught to calculate with his eye the point at which his charge should intercept the quarry, and should fire direct at that. May I suggest that this result—the acme of fine shooting—is possibly reached more quickly by the method advised by "Sagittarius" than by any other. The young shooter puts up his gun on the bird, swings it ahead, and thus learns the point at which the shot is to intercept the quarry. He, perhaps, learns this important lesson better and more quickly thus than by the rather fluky calculations and snap-firing that "F. L. A." advises. But I do think, with "F. L. A.," that the young shot should be taught to regard the aiming at the bird and then swinging not as the end, not as the ideal, but only as the means for getting to the ideal end, which should be, as described by "F. L. A.," throwing up the gun directly at the point at which the shot shall intercept the bird, and firing the instant it touches the shoulder. It seems to me that "Sagittarius" and "F. L. A." are not so much at variance in regard to the ultimate end as to the means.—F. G. TRAVERS.

## HERNE'S OAK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to Mr. Charles Rowland's enquiry, I have to say that in following the footpath which leads from the Windsor Road to Queen Adelaide's Lodge in the Little Park, about halfway on the right, there is a dead tree, close to an avenue of elms. This is what has for long years been pointed out as Herne's Oak. This blasted tree stretches out its bare branches like the skeleton arms of a giant, and has a most weird-like appearance, as if the hunter had really blasted it. Mr. Rowland probably confounds this dead tree with one which was felled by order of George III. a century ago, but the oldest inhabitants maintain that the one described above is the genuine tree. Mr. Rowland can, at all events, see the remains, as I suppose the spot has not been dug up, the site being as I have stated.—W. N. B.

## FALCONRY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to the queries made by "R. G." in your issue of March 18th, I consider it unnecessary to hack merlins, inasmuch as during the greater portion of the time intervening between their capture and the actual taking up they are only able to fly short distances, and if confined in a spacious loft or mews up to that time they will be found to have lost very little in flying power, and can in all probability be entered in a very few days, as they are tamer than if hacked. If one had opportunities of flying them at hack for the three weeks previous to the taking up, they would, in all probability, be stronger and swifter on the wing; but, as stated in my article, I am, owing to a totally unsuitable neighbourhood, unable to fly at hack, in fact have never had any experience of hacking either peregrines or merlins. If "R. G." is so situated that he is able to hack his hawks, he is indeed lucky; but, on the other hand, if he is unable to do so, I feel sure that he will find that it is possible to train merlins successfully without doing so. If reference be made to Mr. Harting's excellent work, it will be seen on page 96 that "if the little hawk be not flown at hack, it must be called off to the lure morning and evening"; a little further on he adds, "in this way the daily exercise is increased, the hawk gets strong on the wing, and sound in wind, until finally it may be entered at the quarry it is destined to be flown at." Various other writers on falconry have stated that flying merlins at hack is unnecessary. As regards the waiting on, merlins may be flown either from the fist, as in the case of the goshawk and sparrow-hawk, or may be taught to wait on fairly well. Personally I prefer the latter course, as the quarry (larks) can be then flushed; the falcon, being on the wing at the time, has shaken herself out, and is better able to put in the deadly first stoop. Of course merlins vary in the pitch they attain, but even if only 20ft. or 30ft. from the ground, they must be in a better position than if flown from the glove. I should be greatly interested to hear the experiences of "R. G.," as there is no limit to the amount one may learn in the noble art of falconry.—J. L. NEWMAN.